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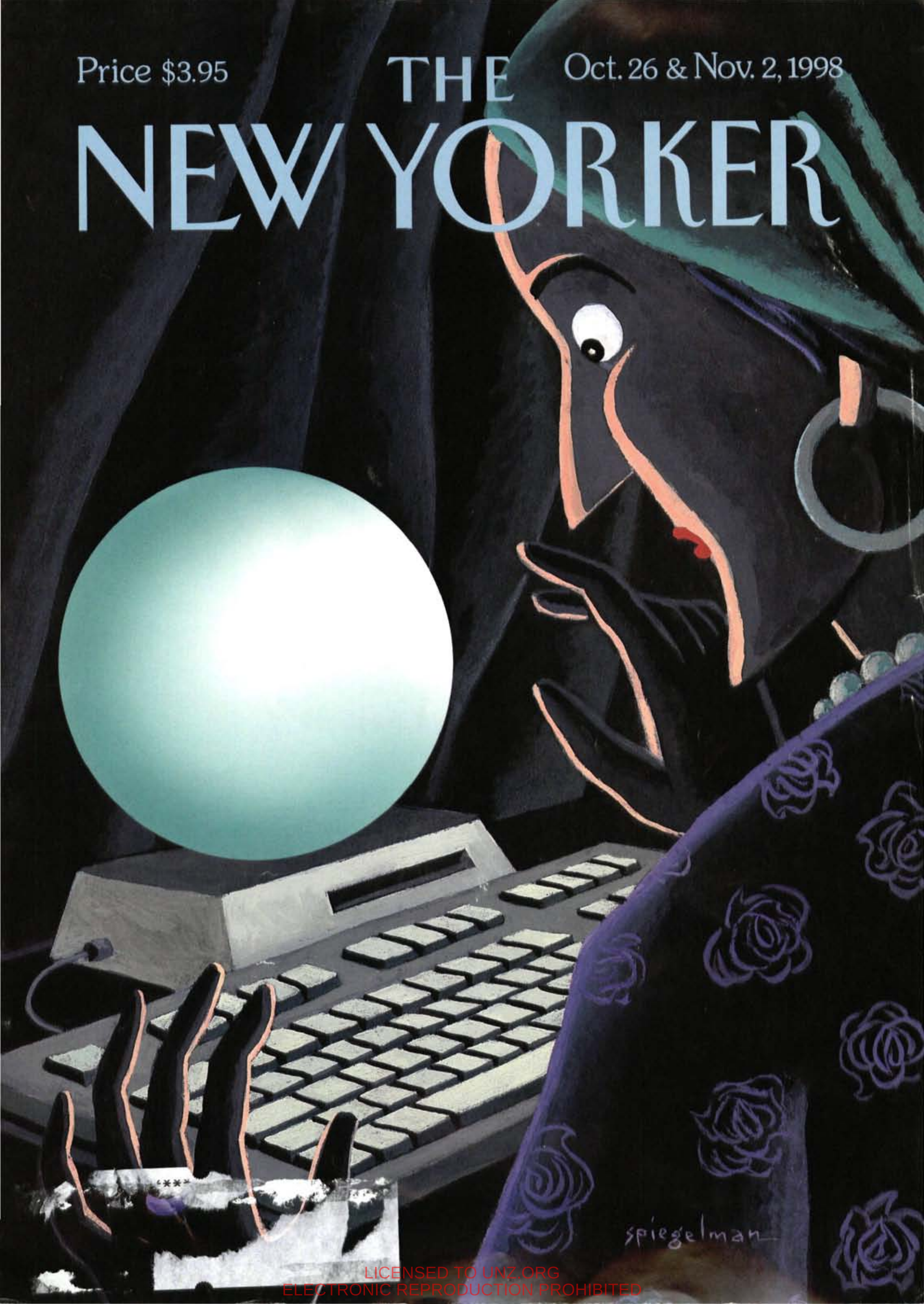
THE NEW YORKER

Oct. 26 & Nov. 2, 1998


spiegelman

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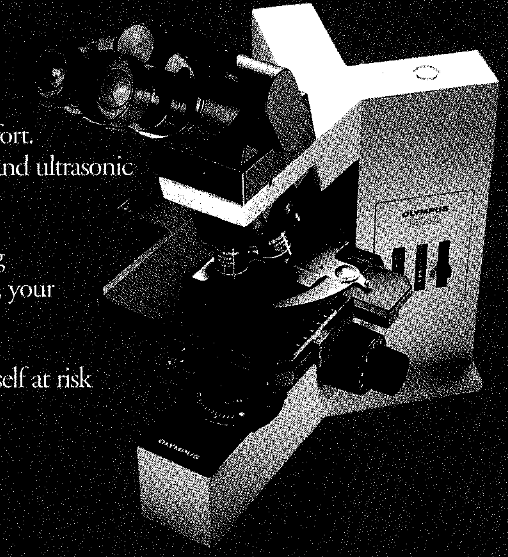

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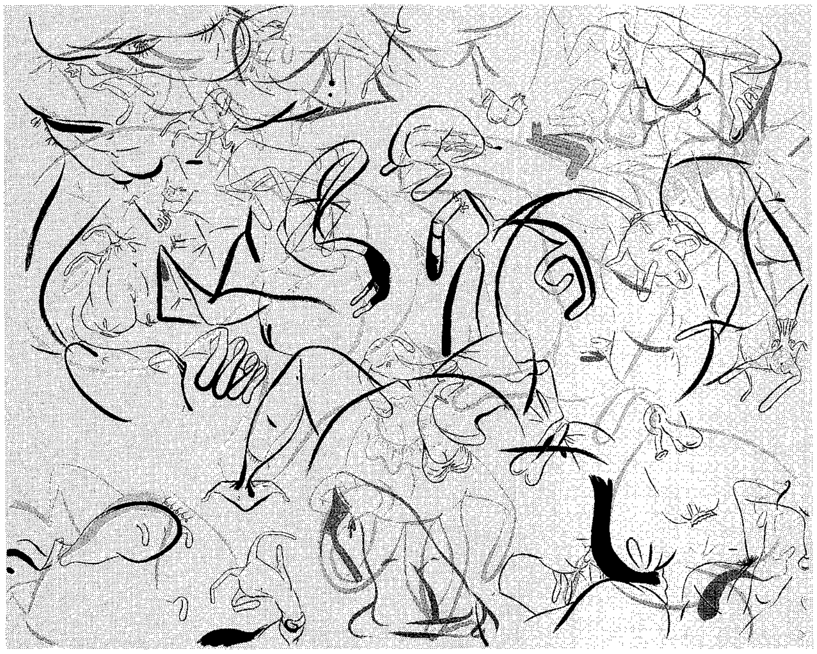
FOCUS ON LIFE

began his career making pictures indebted to European biomorphic Surrealism, before evolving his signature style of luminous, slightly spooky rectangles piled one above the other. The horizontal axis of Rothko's paintings suggests affinities with nineteenth-century Romantic landscapes; on the other hand, the broad expanses of color and severe geometric reduction look forward to the color-field and Minimalist art of the sixties. The temptation at this retrospective is to take a bath in Rothko's luxuriant palette—to see him as an AbEx Bonnard—but one should keep in mind that the artist allied his art with the timeless and the tragic. Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ The first full-scale retrospective of the work of Bob Thompson, a psychedelic African-American appropriation artist whose brief and incendiary career was spent in the heyday of Abstract Expressionism. Through Jan. 3. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)



"Blue Foot, Red Shoe," by Sue Williams, at 303 Gallery.

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—"Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou" presents an astonishing array of objects—dolls, flags, rattles, pots, calabashes, medicine packets, paintings—more than five hundred in all, which bring to life the vivid history and practice of the Afro-Caribbean religion. Through Jan. 3. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"Kerry James Marshall: Mementos" includes intricate and allusive paintings and sculptures (as well as a new site-specific installation) by an artist whose work is informed by the civil-rights violence he witnessed in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963, and Watts, in 1965. Through Nov. 29. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 9; and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St. (744-8181)—"Chinese Snuff Bottles" might sound like an esoteric subject for an exhibition, but these little vessels are marvels of miniature craftsmanship, ranging from tiny landscapes painted on crystal and glass to exquisite geometric designs made from infinitesimal flecks of mother-of-pearl. An interior scene of a court lady peeking from behind a screen, as a boy clangs a pair of cymbals and a dog frolics at his feet, is precisely wrought in brilliantly colored chips of semiprecious stones and gold lacquer, all inlaid in amber. Through Dec. 13. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Frank Auerbach / Rackstraw Downes—Boldly composed paintings and drawings that balance gesture and psychological penetration in the grand Expressionist manner. The insights of the pencil studies, pared down through erasure, rival those of the finished portraits. A series of canvases of the view from the artist's studio in Camden Town, London, executed in heavy impasto with a subtly shifting palette, recall Monet's serial paintings of haystacks, focussing the emphasis inward, on the artist's eye. / Painstakingly finished drawings, torn from the pad and tacked on the wall, by this noted painter of urban and industrial scenes. Both shows through Oct. 31. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. 541-4900.)

Lawrence Gipe—Monumental paintings that expose the naïveté and hypocrisy of industrial idealism in the period between the World Wars. The centerpiece of the show is "Twentieth Century Limited," a flashy, thirty-two-foot-long mural of gleaming emblems of utopian design—Rockefeller Center, a crackling cyclotron, a futuristic locomotive and airplane—with the muzzle of a cannon in the middle, pointed directly at the viewer. A sepia-toned painting of a train chugging away from the station is called "Departure (Berlin 1940)": the viewer knows exactly where that train is heading. Through Oct. 31. (Helman, 20 W. 57th St. 245-2888.)

"Out of Bounds" / Peter Sullivan—Abstract prints by three veteran artists who challenge some of the boundaries that traditionally separate painting, sculpture, and printmaking. Sylvia Wald was a pioneer of the Abstract Expressionist silk screen; "Between Dimensions," a humorous work from 1950, elegantly balances a mysterious, spidery net against luminous fields of color. Edmond Casarella's deep-relief prints from the sixties superimpose transparent veils of color and often incorporate string for texture. Jacob Kainen's vividly colored monotypes explore a psychological dream world executed in a loose, painterly style. Through Nov. 14. / Paintings and drawings of geometric shapes, mostly Hofmannesque rectangles, in dynamic compositions favoring a palette of flat white, maroon, and beige. Both shows through Oct. 31. (At Hirschl & Adler and Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. 535-8810.)

Short List—**will barnet,** De Nagy, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 262-5050. Through Nov. 14. . . . **lesley dill,** Adams, 41 W. 57th St. 644-5665. Through Nov. 17. . . . **giuseppe gallo,** Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. 399-5510. Through Oct. 31. . . . **al held,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. 980-5454. Through Nov. 14. . . . **robert kushner,** DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 247-2111. Through Nov. 14. . . . **peter loftus,** Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. 759-2345. Through Nov. 14. . . . **henri matisse,** C&M, 45 E. 78th St. 861-0020. Through Dec. 12. . . . **faith ringgold,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. 644-8300. Through Nov. 28. . . . **carol ross,** Gat, 1100 Madison Ave., at 82nd St. 327-0441. Through Nov. 21. . . . **joel shapiro,** Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 421-3292. Through Nov. 14. . . . **elena sisto,** Littlejohn, 41 E. 57th St. 980-2323. Through Nov. 7. . . . **william turnbull,** Mathes, 41 E. 57th St. 752-5135. Through Nov. 28. . . . **ben vautier,** Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. 752-1223. Through Dec. 5.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Maria Marshall—For her twenty-second-long video loop "When I Grow Up I Want to Be a Cooker," the artist filmed her two-year-old son in a sort of baby Bogey moment: the little nipper puffs on a cigarette, inhales deeply, then blows a perfect smoke ring. Confronted over and over with this mixture of social impropriety and casual sensuality, one does not think "wry comment on institutional funding sources" or "delightful sendup of viewer expectations in the age of computer-manipulated imagery." Reactions tend to be more immediate—the image is shocking in a way that Serrano's polemical "Piss Christ" never was. It is rare to come across something that can *épater le bourgeois* anymore. This does. Through Nov. 14. (Team, 527 W. 26th St. 279-9219.)

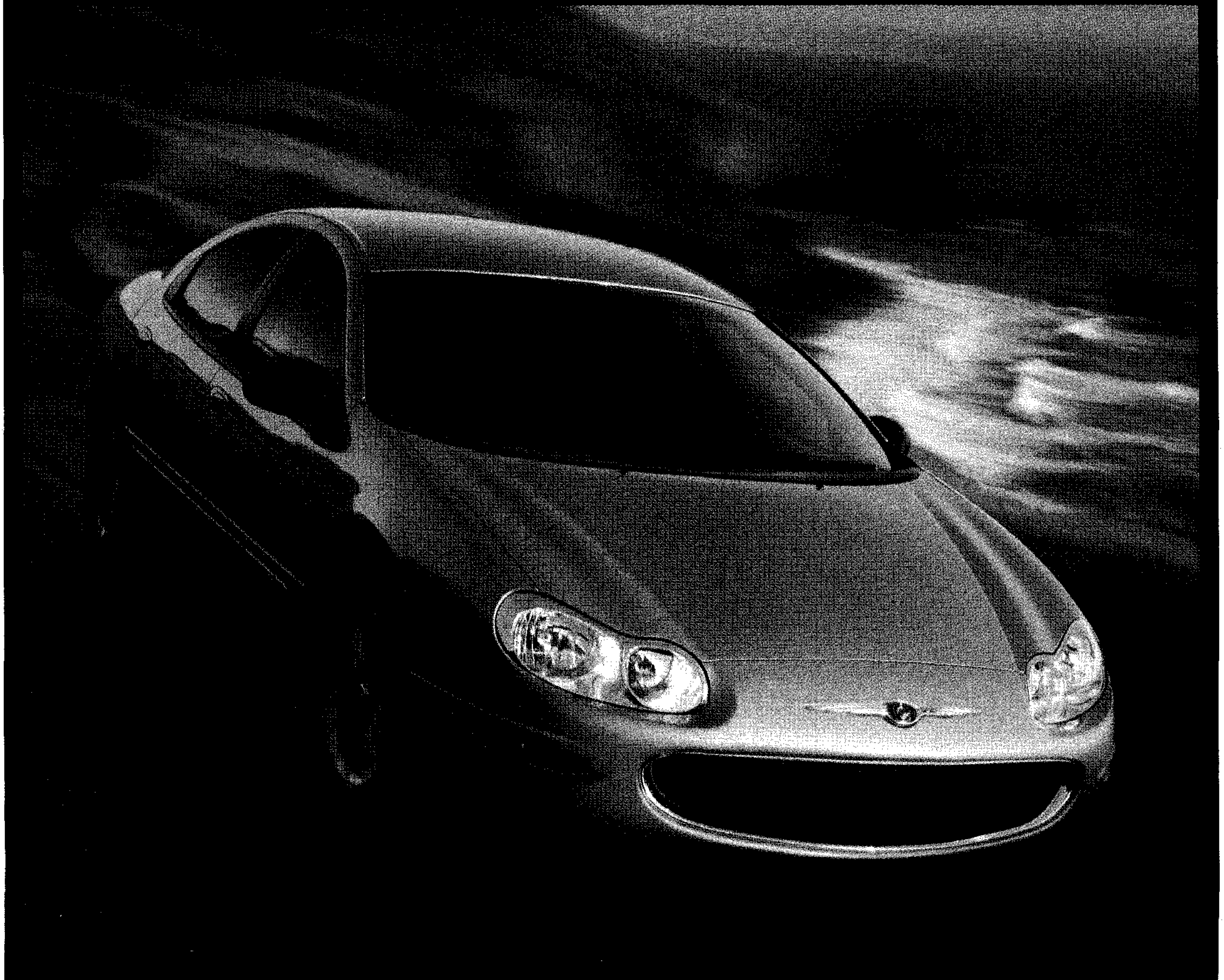
Sue Williams—Large canvases of loopy calligraphic lines on otherwise empty fields. In her last show, Williams's linear snarls depicted vast daisy chains of sexual mayhem. Here, her graceful, late de Kooningesque contours have grown more hallucinatory: as your eyes follow the outlines, her fantasy objects seem to shape-shift unexpectedly, pudenda turns into fashion frill, then to water bottle, and so on. The pseudo-scary sexual stuff has a comical feel—Keystone Freudianism—that owes a lot to Williams's light, sure-handed draftsmanship. Through Nov. 21. (303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121.)

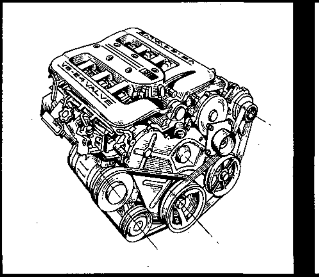
Short List—**shimon attie,** Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. 645-1701. Through Nov. 14. . . . **nayland blake,** Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 243-0200. Through Nov. 28. . . . **heide fasnacht,** Maynes, 529 W. 20th St. 741-3318. Through Nov. 14. . . . **louise fishman,** Cheim & Read, 521 W. 23rd St. 242-7727. Through Nov. 14. . . . **john mahoney,** Liebman Magnan, 552 W. 24th St. 255-3225. Through Nov. 19. . . . **iñigo manglano-ovalle,** Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. 633-6999. Through Nov. 28. . . . **andrew masullo,** Eller, 529 W. 20th St. 206-6411. Through Nov. 14. . . . **george stoll,** Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. 243-3753. Through Nov. 28. . . . **marnie weber,** Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. 633-6555. Through Nov. 21.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Ann Craven—Giant canvases of little songbirds—a finch, a pair of dwarf parrots, a quizzical tanager. At this monumental size, Craven's fulsome paint handling looks delicate—feathery, in fact. The size also highlights the sombre, psychological side of formal portraits: the birdies seem to have a lot on their pretty bird brains, as if they were university presidents. Through Nov. 14. (Marcus, 578 Broadway. 226-3200.)

Sometimes you forget the milk.
Sometimes you forget the bread.
Sometimes you forget the store altogether.





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Joseph Marioni—Monochrome paintings by an artist who is of the same generation as Brice Marden and Robert Ryman but who hasn't achieved anything like their levels of success. Nevertheless, Marioni enjoys a devoted following, especially among painters. Avoiding primary colors, he builds up a thick, almost viscous surface of paint, which, upon close inspection, displays irregularities or fluctuations, making it difficult to read these works as purely theoretical or mechanical. They are quite lovely in a taciturn way, at odds with some of the flashier variants seen in our current outbreak of post-painterly abstraction. Through Dec. 5. (Blum, 99 Wooster St. 343-0441.)

Jeffrey Vallance—"Paranormal Diagrams: Heretical Theories," the first solo New York show of an artist who enjoys a considerable reputation on the West Coast. Vallance seems to fall between the cracks, working in the Conceptualist tradition of artistic anthropology and also in a very L.A. vein of social comedy. In "Shroud of Turin," for example, Vallance finds the faces of clowns; other works "document" images of Richard Nixon found in nature. Vallance's works are often funny, with a not disagreeable undercurrent of malice. Through Oct. 31. (Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. 965-0753.)

"Ideas for the Home"—A sharp-looking collection of mostly abstract paintings of the sort that actually work against the show's rather facetious title. Really, just what sort of modern paintings would you be comfortable with over the sofa? Among the highlights: a gold painting by Lucio Fontana bearing an almost frightening tear in its canvas; a hyper-trippy large-scale Peter Halley that contravenes all protocols of good taste and still looks fabulous; and two terrific "Knives" by Andy Warhol, paintings that haven't been seen much and shouldn't be missed. Through Oct. 31. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. 431-3685.)

Short List—**laurie anderson,** Artists Space, 38 Greene St. 226-3970. Through Nov. 7. . . . **donna dennis** and **thomas lanigan-schmidt,** Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St. 941-5777. Both shows through Nov. 7. . . . **minnie evans,** Ross, 568 Broadway. 343-2161. Through Nov. 14. . . . **caio fonseca,** Senior, 375 West Broadway. 941-0960. Through Nov. 7. . . . **leon golub,** Feldman, 31 Mercer St. 226-3232. Through Nov. 14. . . . **patrick ireland,** Cowles, 420 West Broadway. 925-3500. Through Oct. 31. . . . **jannis kounellis,** Ace, 275 Hudson St. 255-5599. Through Nov. 28. . . . **robert morris,** Castelli, 420 West Broadway. 431-5160. Through Oct. 31. . . . **annika ström,** Kaplan, 48 Greene St. 226-6131. Through Nov. 14. . . . **h. c. westermann,** Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway. 941-0012. Through Nov. 7.

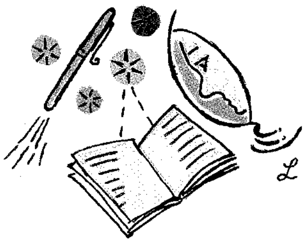
AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

Christie's—Oct. 21-22: Jewelry. . . . ¶ Oct. 23: French furniture, decorative pieces, and works of fine art. . . . ¶ Oct. 26: Wristwatches. . . . ¶ Oct. 27: Japanese paintings, prints, and screens, including an important collection of ukiyo-e paintings. . . . ¶ Oct. 28: A single-owner sale of Japanese art—in particular, sword fittings. . . ¶ Oct. 29: The third and final installment of the auction of Haskell F. Norman's library of historic scientific and medical titles; also, immediately following the Haskell sale, the auction of a lengthy tenth-century Byzantine palimpsest manuscript of Archimedes, containing six of his mathematical treatises (one of which, "On the Method of Mechanical Theorems," appears nowhere else). (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1000.) . . . At **christie's east:** Oct. 22: Silver. . . . ¶ Oct. 27: Nineteenth-century furniture and decorative art. . . . ¶ Oct. 28: Nineteenth-century and Impressionist paintings. . . . ¶ Nov. 3: The centerpiece of an auction of sports memorabilia is a group of forty items that belonged to "Shoeless" Joe Jackson, including legal correspondence regarding his alleged role in fixing the 1919 World Series. (219 E. 67th St. 606-0400.)

BOOK CURRENTS

Spaced Out

John Glenn, who returns to space this week aboard the shuttle Discovery, is no stranger to the G force. He's travelled at seventeen thousand five hundred miles per hour before. He's adjusted to the fact that there are two thousand one hundred and sixty-nine more display components on the Discovery's control panels than there were on the Friendship 7, which he manned in 1962, when he became the first man to orbit the Earth. He is an old hand. But what of tomorrow's astronauts? Will they be different from the ones we've mythologized already? Andrew Chaikin—who spent eight years interviewing the Apollo astronauts for **A Man on the Moon** (reissued this year by Penguin), his definitive account of the Apollo space program—thinks so. "Already, there's a much broader spectrum of personalities going up into space," Chaikin says. "Scientists, mission specialists, doctors. There's going to be continued emphasis on the shuttle astronauts to be team players. A few of the men who flew during the Apollo missions had pretty big egos."



Alan Bean was not one of them: he was so humbled by his Apollo 12 visit to the moon that he retired from NASA in 1981 to become a full-time painter. **Apollo** (Greenwich Workshop Press), his new collection of paintings, depicts astronauts exploring the lunar surface. Although Bean's memories of the bleak gray moonscape at first inhibited him (as the astronaut Stuart Roosa once said, "There is nothing there, not even wind"), he soon began to incorporate purples and reds into his paintings to suggest the texture of craters and the heat of the sun.

Paintings of Mars—the next great frontier—as well as Norman Rockwell's quaint renderings of Americans gazing skyward in a more hopeful time, illustrate **Nasa & the Exploration of Space** (Stewart, Tabori & Chang). This historical overview, by Roger D. Launius, contains an account of the 1959 NASA press conference in which the first seven astronauts were introduced to the nation. Of the "effervescent and sentimental" Glenn, Launius writes, "Near the end of the meeting, a reporter asked them if they believed they would come back safely from space and all raised their hands. Glenn raised both of his."

CATHERINE LAZURE

Books.
[AT BARNES & NOBLE]

THE RAPE OF NANKING

by Iris Chang

During seven weeks in 1937, Japanese troops brutally slaughtered more than a quarter million civilians in the ancient Chinese city of Nanking. Now, through the perspective of victims, soldiers, foreign businessmen, and the clergy, Chinese-American author Iris Chang—whose grandparents survived the massacre—bears witness to this long-forgotten holocaust. By exposing the atrocities of Nanking and the disturbing denial that followed, this *New York Times* bestseller becomes not only a gripping historical narrative, but also an impassioned call to confront the causes and consequences of *all* war crimes, both in the past and in the future. (Penguin)

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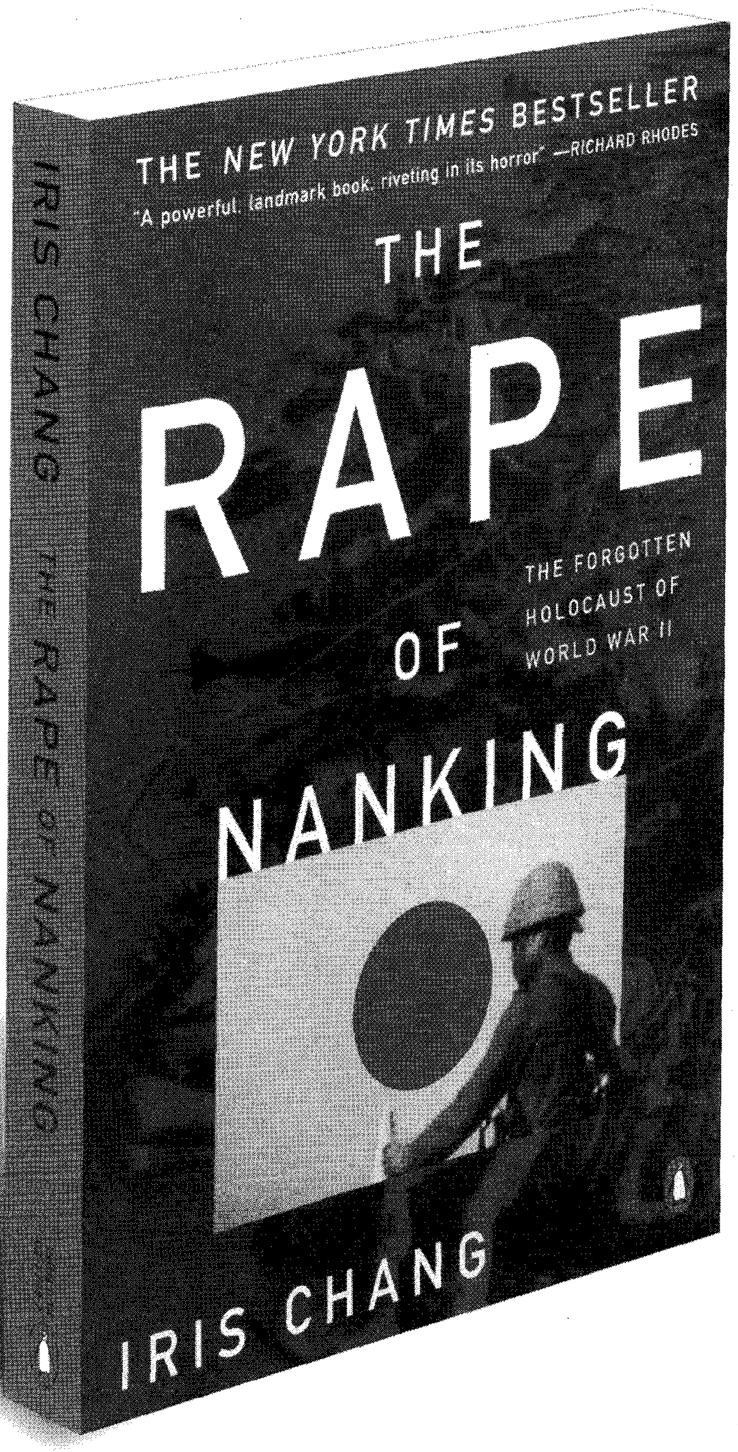
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ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sotheby's—Oct. 21: English and Continental silver. . . . ¶ Oct. 21-22: An arcade auction of jewelry. . . . ¶ Oct. 23: English furniture, as well as English and Continental pottery and porcelain. . . . ¶ Oct. 24: Items from the Ira and Nancy Koger collection of English furniture, decorations, and fine art, formerly housed in the couple's home in Savannah, Georgia. . . . ¶ Oct. 27: Watches and clocks. . . . ¶ Oct. 28: Nineteenth-century furniture. . . . ¶ Oct. 29-31: Prints. . . . ¶ Nov. 2: Byzantine coins. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)

Phillips—Oct. 21: Asian art. . . . ¶ Oct. 25: Antique and modern jewelry, including a half-million-dollar rare fancy yellow forty-five-carat diamond. (406 E. 79th St. 570-4830.)

Doyle—Oct. 21: English and Continental furniture and decorative pieces; also Old Master paintings. . . . ¶ Nov. 2: European paintings and sculptures. . . . ¶ Nov. 3: Furniture, decorative art, and paintings. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730.)

Swann—Oct. 22: Three hundred lots of first editions, inscribed copies, and other volumes of interest to aficionados of modern literature. . . . ¶ Oct. 29: Literature, ephemera, and posters relating to magic. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Julius Shulman—Wonderfully crisp modernist interiors and exteriors, in black-and-white and color, by this octogenarian chronicler of the Southern California architecture of Richard Neutra, Charles Eames, Raphael Soriano, Frank Lloyd Wright, and others. Through Nov. 14. (Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255.)

International Center of Photography—"Walker Evans, Simple Secrets," a show of works from the collection of Marian and Benjamin A. Hill. . . . ¶ "Intimate City: The Photographs of Thomas Roma." Both shows through Nov. 29. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 8; and Saturdays and Sundays, 10 to 6.)

International Center of Photography Midtown—"Seeing Is Believing," a survey of the work of Vik Muniz. Through Nov. 8. (Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. 860-1777. Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 8; and Saturdays and Sundays, 10 to 6.)

Short List—**HARRY CALLAHAN** and **ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG,** Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Both shows through Oct. 24. . . . **LARRY CLARK,** Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. 206-9100. Through Oct. 24. . . . **NAN GOLDIN,** Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 243-0200. Closed Saturdays; through Nov. 28. . . . **JAN LUKAS,** De Lellis, 47 E. 68th St. 327-1482. Through Nov. 7. . . . **KATHRYN MARX,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway. 925-5510. Through Nov. 7. . . . **SUSAN MEISELAS,** Leica, 670 Broadway. 777-3051. Opens Saturdays at noon. Through Oct. 24. . . . **RAY K. METZKER** and **ALBERT RENGER-PATZSCH,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. 226-1220. Both shows through Oct. 31. . . . **GORDON PARKS,** Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010. Through Oct. 31. . . . **TOMIO SEIKE,** Gallery 292, at 120 Wooster St. 431-0292. Through Oct. 31. . . . **JOSEF SUDEK,** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. 879-6606. Through Oct. 31. . . . **HIROSHI SUGIMOTO,** Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. 966-6160. Through Oct. 31. . . . **BRETT WESTON,** Houk, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 750-7070. Through Nov. 7.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 501-3330; and for Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St., 854-7799.)

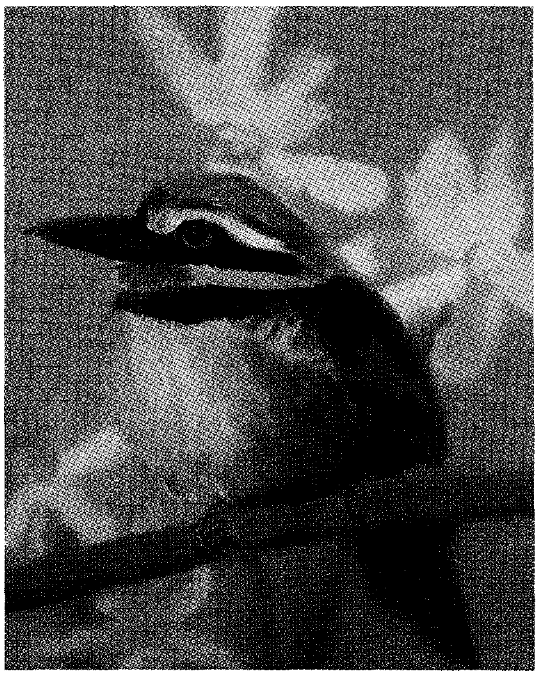
OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**AIDA.** (Oct. 21, Oct. 24, and Oct. 27 at 8; Oct. 31 at 1:30; and Nov. 2 at 7:30.) . . . **LOHENGRIN.** (Oct. 22 at 7.) . . . **CARMEN.** (Oct. 23, Oct. 26, and Oct. 30 at 8.) . . . **SAMSON ET DALILA.** (Oct. 24 at 1:30.) . . . **TOSCA.** (Oct. 28 at 8 and Oct. 31 at 8:30.) . . . **LE NOZZE DI FIGARO,** in the opening performances of a new production, with Renée Fleming, Cecilia Bartoli (as Susanna), Susanne Mentzer, Bryn Terfel (as Figaro), and Dwayne Croft; conducted by James Levine. (Oct. 29 at 6:30 and Nov. 3 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

New York City Opera—Oct. 21 at 7:30 and Oct. 23 at 8: "Orfeo ed Euridice." . . . ¶ Oct. 22 at 7:30, Oct. 24 and Oct. 30 at 8, and Oct. 25 and Oct. 31 at 1:30: "Hansel and Gretel," sung in English. . . . ¶ Oct. 24 at 1:30, Oct. 29 at 7:30, and Oct. 31 at 8: "Rigoletto." . . . ¶ Nov. 1 at 1:30: "The Cunning Little Vixen," by Janáček. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 22-23 at 8: The Australian conductor Simone Young leads Harbison's "Remembering Gatsby," Copland's Piano Concerto (with Jeffrey Kahane), and Respighi's tone poems "Pines of Rome," "Fountains of Rome," and "Roman Festivals." . . . ¶ Oct. 29 and Oct. 31 at 8, Oct. 30 at 2, and Nov. 3 at 7:30: Leonard Slatkin conducts Haydn's Symphony No. 99, Barber's "Capricorn Concerto" (featuring three members of the orchestra—flutist Sandra Church, oboist Joseph Robinson, and trumpeter Philip Smith), and Elgar's Violin Concerto (featuring Kennedy, who has abjured the use of his first name—Nigel—which he claims he has always disliked).



"Chestnut-Capped Puff Bird," by Ann Craven (Marcus).

New York Chamber Symphony—At Alice Tully Hall, Gerard Schwarz conducting. Oct. 21 at 8: An all-Mozart program, with soprano Hei-Kyung Hong and mezzo-soprano Rinat Shaham. . . . ¶ Oct. 24 at 8: Ms. Hong is featured in three Handel arias and Barber's "Knoxville: Summer of 1915," in a program that also includes a new work by Michael Hersch, Carter's "Elegy," and Haydn's Symphony No. 99.

Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal—At Carnegie Hall, with Charles Dutoit conducting and Martha Argerich as piano soloist. Oct. 24 at 8: Sibelius's "Finlandia," Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 1, Hindemith's "Mathis der Maler" Symphony, and Enescu's "Romanian Rhapsody" No. 1. . . . ¶ Oct. 25 at 2: Dutilleux's "Timbres, Espace, Mouvement," Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 1, Debussy's "Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune," and Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" (in Ravel's orchestration).

Orchestra of St. Luke's/St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—For the first time in its twenty-four-year history, the St. Luke's organization is dedicating its entire season to a single composer—and who could be more deserving of such an honor than Franz Joseph Haydn? The first week of the festival (which will also touch down for weeks in late January and early March) presents chamber and orchestral works from throughout the composer's career. In the opening program, members of the St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble play the composer's early "Times of the Day" triptych: the Symphonies No. 6 ("Le Matin"), No. 7 ("Le Midi"), and No. 8 ("Le Soir"), scaled down to the chamber forces that were available at the Esterházy court when the pieces were composed. (Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway. Oct. 25 at 2. For information about tickets, call 212-594-6100. . . . ¶ Weill Recital Hall. Oct. 28 at 8.) . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 8: Frans Brüggen conducts the Orchestra of St. Luke's in the Scherzando No. 3 (one of six miniature symphonies the composer wrote upon being hired by the Esterházy court), the late Sinfonia Concertante (featuring the orchestra's first-desk oboist, bassoonist, violinist, and cellist), the Symphony No. 59 ("Fire," a midcareer Sturm-und-Drang work), and the well-known D-Major Piano Concerto (featuring Alicia de Larrocha). (Carnegie Hall.)

Choir of Corpus Christi Church—Louise Basbas directs the singers in sacred works by Tomás Luis de Victoria, including his Requiem Mass of 1605. Presented by Music Before 1800. (Corpus Christi Church, 529 W. 121st St. 666-9266. Oct. 25 at 4.)

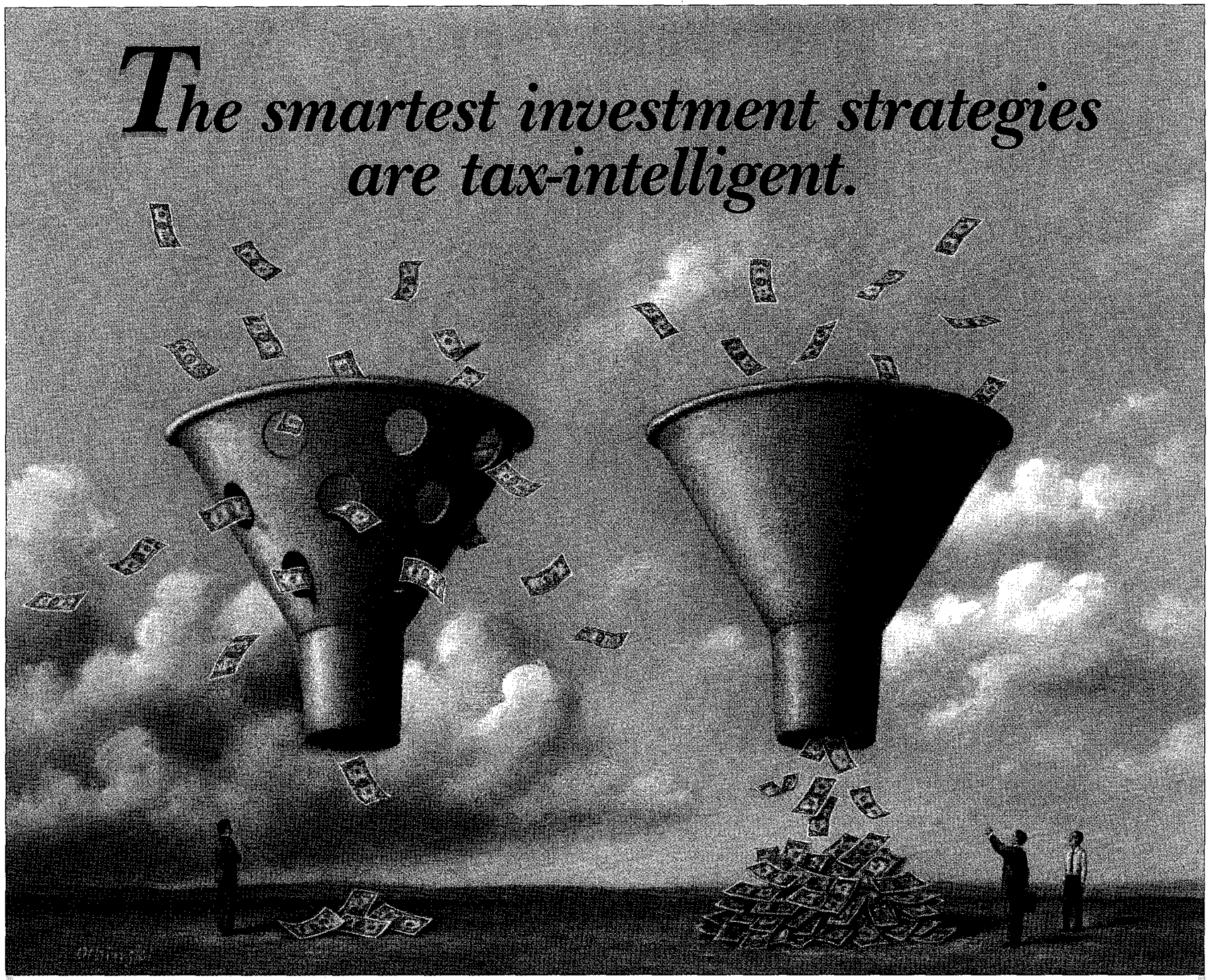
Ewa Podleś and the Moscow Chamber Orchestra—The contralto sings arias from six operas in this all-Rossini concert conducted by Constantine Orbelian. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 25 at 8.)

Kiev Camerata—Schoenberg's "Verklärte Nacht" and Tchaikovsky's Serenade for Strings, with Virko Baley conducting the thirty-two-member string orchestra. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 26 at 6:45.)

Budapest Festival Orchestra—At Carnegie Hall, with Iván Fischer conducting and András Schiff as the featured pianist. Oct. 28 at 8: Stravinsky's "Dumbarton Oaks" Concerto and "Firebird" Suite, in addition to Bartók's Piano Concertos No. 1 and No. 3. . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 8: Stravinsky's "Jeu de Cartes" and "Petrouchka," as well as Bartók's Piano Concerto No. 2.

Arcadian Academy—The Baroque ensemble, conducted from the harpsichord by Nicholas McGegan, offers seventeenth-century Italian instrumental music, in addition to a pair of cantatas by Alessandro Scarlatti (featuring countertenor David Daniels). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Oct. 29 at 8.)

"Tchaikovsky and His World"—The big-city version of last summer's Bard Festival. Oct. 31 at 10 A.M.: A symposium about Tchaikovsky and Russian cultural politics. (Kaplan Penthouse, Rose Building, Lincoln Center. Open to anyone holding a ticket to a later concert.) . . . ¶ At 2:30: Several songs, the piano cycle "The Seasons," and the Piano Trio. (Alice Tully Hall.) . . . ¶ At 8: Leon Botstein leads the American Symphony Orchestra in a con-



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cert that includes the Valse-Scherzo for Violin (with Juliette Kang), the Concert-Fantasia for Piano (with Alan Gampel), and the Symphony No. 4. (Alice Tully Hall.)

ORPHEUS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA—The conductorless ensemble performs Schumann's "Overture, Scherzo, and Finale," Britten's "Les Illuminations" (featuring soprano Dawn Upshaw), Carter's Clarinet Concerto (with Charles Neidich), and Mozart's Symphony No. 38 (the "Prague"). (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 31 at 8.)

AMERICAN COMPOSERS ORCHESTRA—Gerard Schwarz leads the première of Anthony Kelley's "The Breaks" (an homage to Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton), plus David Stock's Violin Concerto (with Andrés Cárdenes) and David Diamond's Symphony No. 2. (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 1 at 3.)

WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL CHOIR—James O'Donnell directs the ensemble from London. (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. 664-9360. Nov. 3 at 7:30.)

RECITALS

ARCADI VOLODOS—The pianist performs his own "Variations on a Theme from 'Ruslan and Ludmila,'" in addition to pieces by Scriabin, Rachmaninoff, Glinka, Schumann, and Liszt. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 21 at 7:30.)

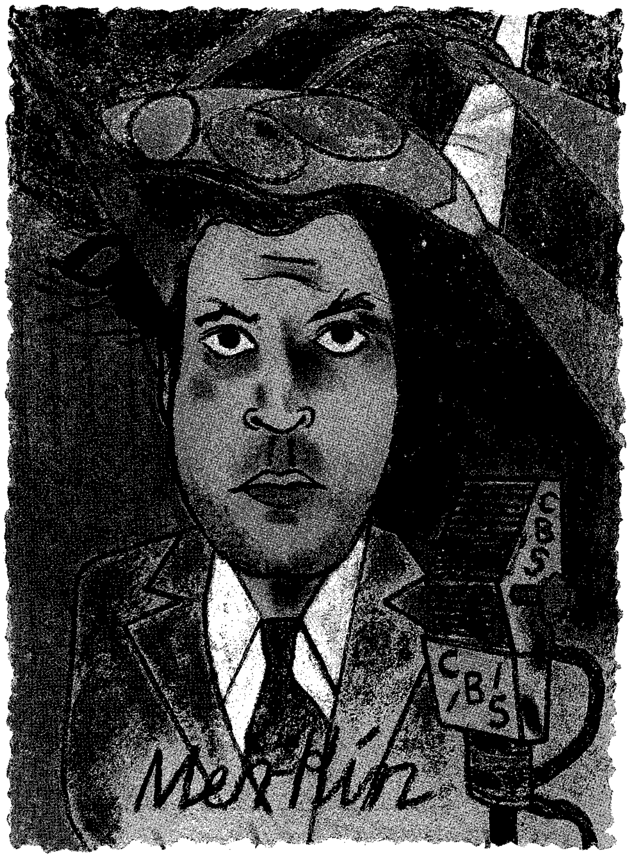
KRONOS STRING QUARTET—This foursome was a shocking addition to the staid world of the string quartet when it was founded, in 1973. Twenty-five years and four hundred premières later, with the original membership intact, the group reigns over that niche of contemporary music which emphasizes cross-cultural and hybridized musical styles. Oct. 22 at 7:30: Works by Terry Riley, Gabriela Ortiz, Hamza El Din, and Schnittke. . . . ¶ Oct. 23 at 7:30: Music by Harry Partch, Steve Reich ("Different Trains"), and Stravinsky (an arrangement of "Le Sacre du Printemps"). . . . ¶ Oct. 24 at 7:30: P. Q. Phan's "Lên Dòng" and Tan Dun's "Ghost Opera," among other works. (BAM's Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 718-636-4100.)

BARGEMUSIC—Oct. 22 at 7:30 and Oct. 25 at 4. Presenting chamber works by Mozart, Hindemith, and Ravel (his Piano Trio). . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 7:30 and Nov. 1 at 4: Beethoven's D-Major Violin Sonata and his G-Minor Cello Sonata, plus Brahms's C-Minor Piano Quartet. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061.)

SONIC BOOM FESTIVAL—The annual festival of the new continues at the Miller Theatre. Oct. 24: Continuum offers works by Arvo Pärt. . . . ¶ Oct. 25: The première of Shirish Korde's opera "Rasa" (based on Bharati Mukherjee's 1989 novel, "Jasmine"), performed by the Da Capo Chamber Players, New York Virtuosi Singers, soprano Elizabeth Keusch, and a gaggle of actors and dancers. . . . ¶ Oct. 27: Speculum Musicae performs music by Elliott Carter, including his Double Concerto and his recently completed "Tempo e Tempi" (with soprano Lucy Shelton). (Evenings at 8.)

JON NAKAMATSU—The gold-medal winner of the most recent Van Cliburn International Piano Competition performs Beethoven's E-Major Sonata (Op. 109), Bolcom's Nine Bagatelles, Stravinsky's Four Études, and works by Chopin and Liszt (including the latter's "Sonetto No. 104 del Petrarca"). (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 26 at 8.)

JAMES GALWAY—The flutist performs solo sonatas and trio sonatas by Bach, assisted by flutist Jeanne Galway (his wife), violinist Monica Huggett, violist da gamba Sarah Cunningham, and harpsichordist Phillip Moll. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 27 at 7:30.)



"Orson the Alien!," at the Museum of Television and Radio.

PHILIPPE LEFEBVRE—The "organiste titulaire" of Notre Dame de Paris performs works by Marchand, Franck, Duruflé, and Dupré, and improvises on a submitted theme. (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. 288-2520. Oct. 27 at 8.)

HESPÈRION XX AND LA CAPELLA REIAL DE CATALUNYA—Violist da gamba Jordi Savall leads the two early-music ensembles in music from the Spanish court of Philip II. (Alice Tully Hall. Oct. 28 at 8.)

SEQUITUR—The contemporary-music group offers two classics by George Crumb: "Ancient Voices of Children" and "Black Angels." (Miller Theatre. Oct. 29 at 8.)

BYRON JANIS—Performing piano works by Chopin, Prokofiev, and others. (Alice Tully Hall. Oct. 29 at 7:30.)

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER—Presenting Hindemith's Sonata No. 1 for Viola and Piano, Fauré's Piano Trio, and Mendelssohn's String Quintet in A Major. (Alice Tully Hall. Oct. 30 at 8 and Nov. 1 at 5.)

JUILLIARD STRING QUARTET—The foursome plays quartets by Mozart (in D Minor, K. 421), Carter (his Fifth), and Beethoven (in F Major, Op. 59, No. 1). (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Oct. 31 at 8. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

ST. PETERSBURG STRING QUARTET—An hour-long concert comprising Beethoven's Quartet in E-Flat Major (Op. 127) and Glazunov's Quartet No. 5. (Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center. Nov. 1 at 11 A.M. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC ENSEMBLES—Members of the orchestra perform Kenneth Fuchs's "Sticks and Tom(s)," Kodály's Serenade for Two Violins and Viola, Piazzolla's Piano Trio, and Dvořák's A-Major Piano Quintet (Op. 81). (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 1 at 3.)

KENNEDY—In a program that includes solo-violin works by Bartók and Bach, as well as his arrangements of Jimi Hendrix compositions (for which he is joined by several colleagues). (Avery Fisher Hall. Nov. 1 at 7.)

MAURIZIO POLLINI—The pianist performs Schumann's B-Minor Allegro and C-Major Fantasy, in addition to Chopin's Sonata No. 2 (and a pair of his nocturnes). (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 2 at 7:30.)

JORDI SAVALL AND ROLF LISLEVAND—The violist da gamba and the theorbist offer works by Marin Marais, Tobias Hume, and other Baroque composers. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. Nov. 2 at 8. For information about tickets, call 800-627-0655.)

GREGORY FULKERSON—The violinist performs Bach's three unaccompanied sonatas. (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 2 at 8. . . . **NOTE:** The unaccompanied partitas follow on Nov. 4.)

VIENNA PHILHARMONIC LITE—A chamber group of players from the Vienna Philharmonic performs contredanses, polkas, and other toe-tapping selections by Mozart, Beethoven, Johann Strauss, Jr., and others. (Caspary Auditorium, Rockefeller University, York Ave. at 66th St. Nov. 3 at 6:30. For information about tickets, call 856-1131. A benefit concert.)

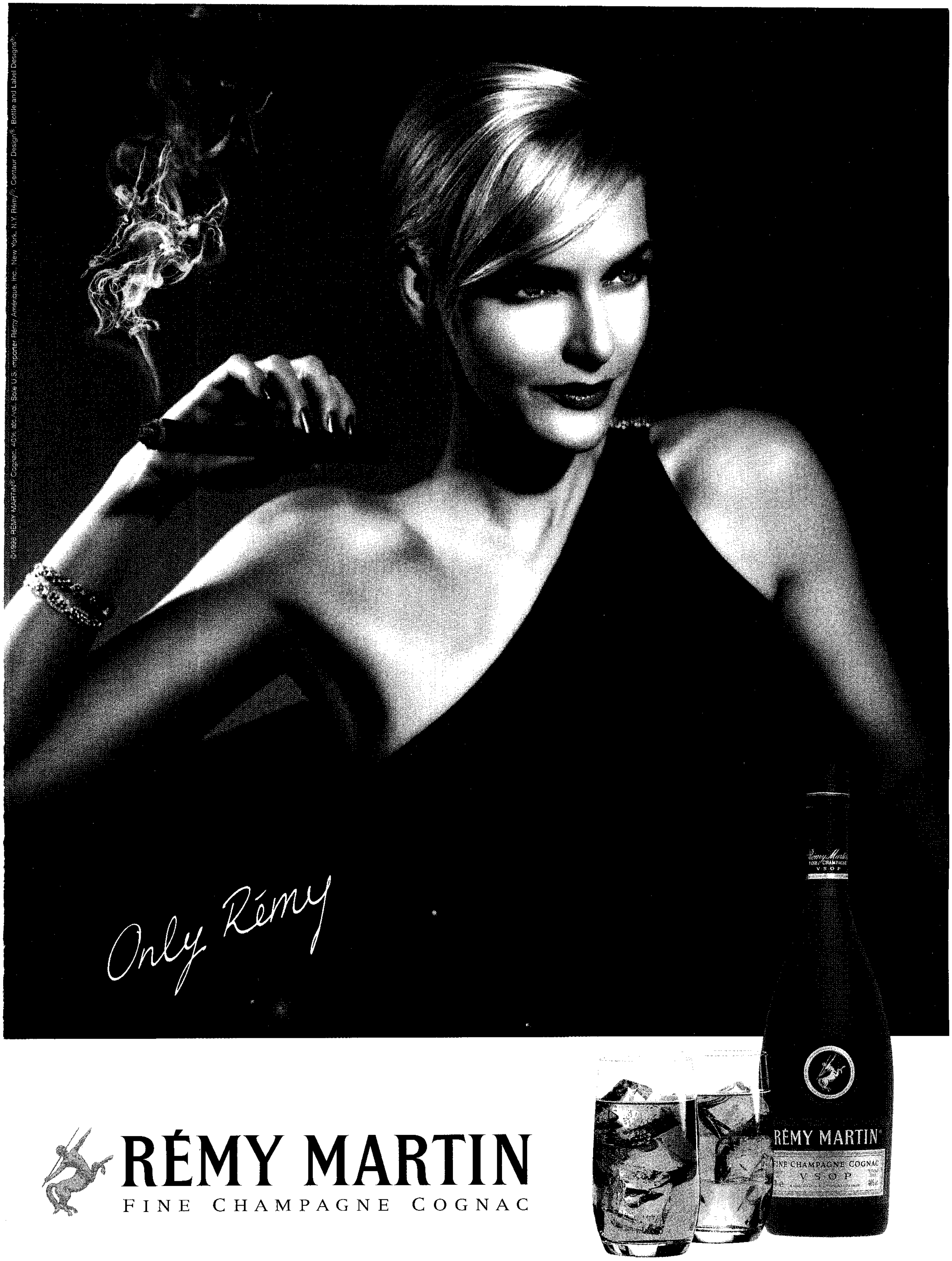
ABOVE AND BEYOND

"WAR OF THE WORLDS"—Sixty years ago this Halloween eve, a radio broadcaster shocked the nation when he interrupted a program of ballroom music to announce that Martians had landed in Grovers Mill, New Jersey. Those aliens were famously fictional, and the whole affair helped the man behind the microphone, a young actor named Orson Welles, to write his own ticket to Hollywood. Paying tribute to Welles's audacious broadcast, the Sci-Fi Channel presents "Orson the Alien! The Untold Story Behind 'The War of the Worlds,'" an original eight-character radio drama by science-fiction writer Terry Bisson and Sci-Fi Channel producer Brian Smith, starring Walter Koenig ("Star Trek"'s Chekov). (Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. Oct. 30 at 10. 621-6600. The play will also be broadcast live on the Web, at www.scifi.com.)

READINGS—Oct. 21 at 8: By Diamanda Galás, Chloe Webb, Lili Taylor, and other singers, actors, and writers, from the work of the Marquis de Sade. (St. Marks In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. Tickets at the door.) . . . ¶ Oct. 22 at 6:30: By poet W. S. Merwin. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 8: By novelists Susan Minot ("Evening") and Haruki Murakami ("The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle"), from their work. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.) . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 7:30: By playwright Tony Kushner, poet Amiri Baraka, actor Wallace Shawn, and others, from the "Communist Manifesto." The following day, starting at 9 A.M., a host of political activists, union organizers, academics, and historians mark the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Marx's tract with a program of talks, films, and oral histories, highlighted by a round-table discussion, at 7:30, with Cornel West, Stephen Jay Gould, and others. Sponsored by the Brecht Forum. For more information, call 242-4201. (Great Hall, Cooper Union. Tickets at the door.) . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 8: By historian Douglas Brinkley, novelist Shashi Tharoor, and *New Yorker* writer Philip Gourevitch, from their work. (National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park S. No tickets necessary.)

TALK—Oct. 23 at 4:15: Choreographer Angelin Preljocaj talks about his work and screens dance films he's directed (see Dance). (French Institute–Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. 355-6160.)

RICHARD MERKIN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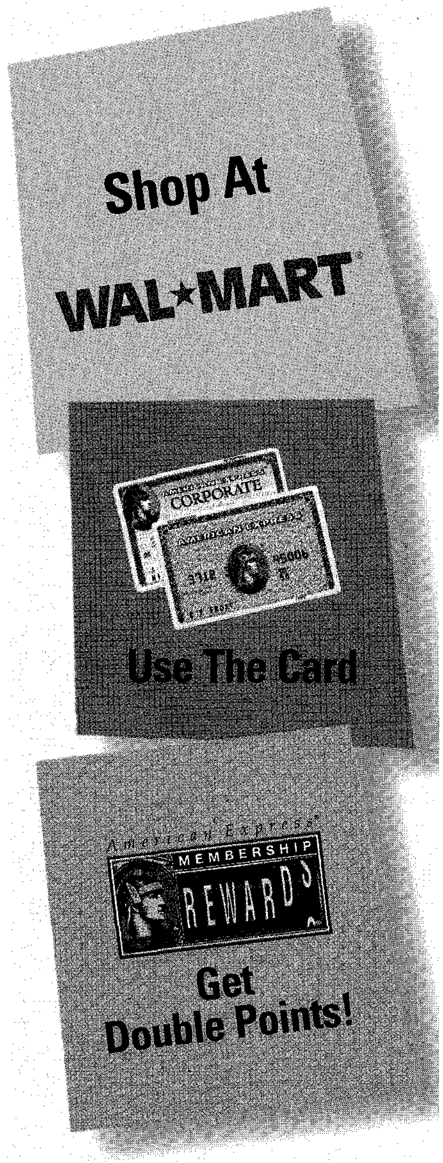

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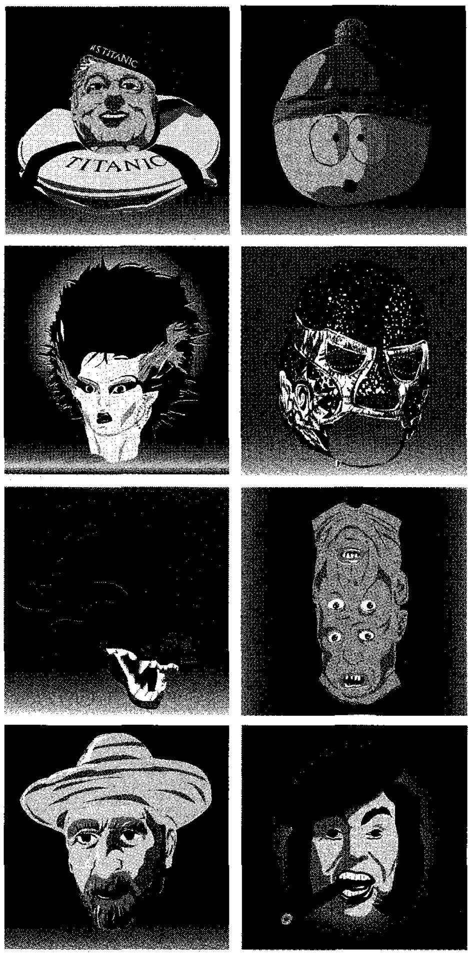
ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

Masquerades

How to disguise yourself for the big parade through the West Village this Halloween—or perhaps get a laugh from the neighbors as you chaperone the kids on their rounds for tricks and treats? As usual, the city's mask and costume shops abound with the good, the bad, and the just plain ugly.



PETER STEMMLER

Every inch of shelf space at **Halloween Adventure Shops** (104 Fourth Ave., between 11th and 12th Sts.; 673-4546) is given over to a gruesomely egalitarian gallery of aliens, movie stars, and politicians in or out of trouble. The most fetching mask in an array of Clinton clones shows the President in a precariously blithe mood, dressed for ruin—or perhaps rescue—as the skipper of the Titanic ($30). Other, less ambiguous caricatures of our beleaguered Chief Executive come outfitted with horns and hats in the form of oversized condoms. Connoisseurs of the rudest cartoon on TV—cable television's "South Park"—can turn themselves into latex look-alikes of two of the show's most hilariously unruly kids: Stan (pictured) and Cartman ($35 each). This little shop of horrors also harbors a double-headed monster that manages to be both appalling and appealing ($59), as well as an alluring, simply frightful Bride of Frankenstein ($119), who is featured in the new movie "Gods & Monsters."

Over at **Little Rickie** (49½ First Ave., at 3rd St.; 505-6467), New Yorkers who are too timid to vent their rage at overheated boom boxes and car alarms, cabdrivers who get lost, and subway riders who keep the doors from closing might consider donning a menacing—and sequinned—Mexican wrestling mask ($22) that comes with exquisitely tailored eye slits and a large opening for running off at the mouth. A shiny body-length cape will fill out the ensemble.

What better way to get a little extra sympathy—not to mention respect—on October 31st than by showing up at the doorstep as Vincent van Gogh? A not-so tormented likeness of the artist ($24), who is currently drawing big crowds at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, is available at both **Abracadabra** (19 W. 21st St.; 627-5194) and **Love Saves the Day** (119 Second Ave., at 7th St.; 228-3802). The painter stares out from under his familiar straw hat, presumably to protect his sensitive Dutch skin from the hot sun of Arles. Both of his ears are still intact.

The toy store **Dinosaur Hill** (302 E. 9th St., between 1st and 2nd Aves.; 473-5850) offers a line of whimsical, beautifully made children's masks from a company called Eco Brazil—ingeniously designed foam-rubber tigers, elephants, alligators, toucans, and wolves ($21). The world's Halloween maskmakers work too slowly to have come up with good likenesses of the season's scariest celebrities—Kenneth Starr and Linda Tripp. Nor, surprisingly, do caricatures of "that woman," Ms. Lewinsky, seem to be showing up in any of the city's Halloween stores. One option for Monica wannabes: Abracadabra carries a Mike Myers mask from the movie "Wayne's World" that, when accessorized by a beret and a stogie, eerily suggests what the wayward intern might have looked like when she got the first call from Starr ($36). Party on, Monica!

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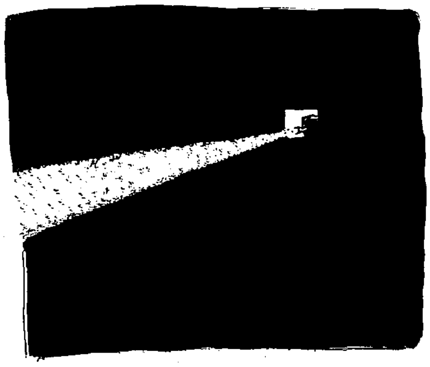


THE MOVIES

OPENING

American History X—A drama about two brothers (Edward Norton and Edward Furlong) who become involved in murder. Directed by Tony Kaye. Opening Oct. 30.

Apt Pupil—Bryan Singer's tale of a high-school student (Brad Renfro) who blackmails his neighbor (Ian McKellen), a Nazi war criminal. Opening Oct. 23.

The Cruise—Reviewed below in Film Notes. Opening Oct. 23.

John Carpenter's Vampires—A horror film, based on John Steakley's novel "Vampire$," about a team of vampire slayers (James Woods, Tim Guinee, and Daniel Baldwin) in New Mexico. Opening Oct. 30.

Lenny Bruce: Swear to Tell the Truth—Reviewed below in Film Notes. Oct. 21-Nov. 3.

Life Is Beautiful—Roberto Benigni directs, and plays the lead in, this film about life in a small Tuscan town during the Second World War. Opening Oct. 23. (Angelika Film Center and Paris.)

Living Out Loud—Writer-director Richard LaGravenese's comedy about a New York divorcée (Holly Hunter). With Danny DeVito and Queen Latifah. Opening Oct. 30.

Orgazmo—Trey Parker wrote, directed, and stars in this comedy about a Mormon who becomes a porn star. Opening Oct. 23.

Pleasantville—Two teen-agers from the present (Tobey Maguire and Reese Witherspoon) are transported into a fifties black-and-white sitcom. Directed by Gary Ross; also with William H. Macy and Joan Allen. Opening Oct. 23.

Opening Oct. 23, Timothy Levitch in Bennett Miller's "The Cruise."

EDEL RODRIGUEZ

Soldier—An action story set in the future, with Kurt Russell and Jason Scott Lee, directed by Paul Anderson. Opening Oct. 23.

Talk of Angels—A tale of romance and the Spanish Civil War, based on Kate O'Brien's novel "Mary Lavelle." With Polly Walker and Vincent Perez; directed by Nick Hamm. Opening Oct. 30.

FILM NOTES

(If a movie has been reviewed recently in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

Antz—The latest showpiece for computer animation, with all the contoured, suspiciously gleaming perfection that this entails. In this case, most of the characters are ants—a curious choice, since they all tend to look roughly the same, and it takes a while to sort out the heroes from the villains. Fortunately, help is at hand from the absurdly starry cast of voices; the leading ant, Z, is played by Woody Allen, and his new royal girlfriend by Sharon Stone. (In your dreams, Woody.) Gene Hackman speaks the role of a murderous general, with Christopher Walken as his sidekick; best of all is Sylvester Stallone, cast *completely* against type as a dim but helpful hunk of brawn. The plot is a swift, if confusing, account of Z's ascent to a station above that of his millions of fellow-workers; the directors—Eric Darnell and Tim Johnson—seem slightly unsure about what they think of old-fashioned working-class solidarity. With Anne Bancroft, Danny Glover, Jennifer Lopez, and—as a couple of Wasp wasps—Dan Aykroyd and Jane Curtin.—*Anthony Lane* (10/19/98) (Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

Bad Manners—Deception, repression, jealousy. Those are the themes—the nouns, if you will—of the screenplay by David Gilman, based on his play "Ghost in the Machine," originally produced at Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre. Here are the adjectives that come to mind while watching the film: contentious, tendentious, pretentious. David Strathairn and Bonnie Bedelia play an unhappy older academic couple living in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Saul Rubinek and Caroleen Feeney play an unhappy younger academic couple who come to visit. Four academic types under one roof, drinking and acting out. Hmm.—*Ken Marks* (Quad Cinema.)

Beloved—A drama about an escaped slave haunted by the grown-up ghost of her dead child, based on Toni Morrison's novel. Directed by Jonathan Demme; with Oprah Winfrey, Danny Glover, and Thandie Newton. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Cinema I, Guild, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Celebration—Filmed with natural light and sound and urgently searching handheld cameras, Thomas Vinterberg's black comedy buzzes with enough energy to make you think he has set about reinventing cinema. The problem is the film's story—it's shot through with mold. Three siblings (Ulrich Thomsen, Thomas Bo Larsen, and Paprika Steen) return to the Danish countryside to celebrate the sixtieth birthday of their powerful father (Henning Moritzen); smack in the middle of the big party, they erupt with anger at his past abuse. Vinterberg's jittery technique aims for authenticity in the moment, and he does coax delicious performances from his actors, but take away the style, and this film is monotonous and shallow. In Danish.—*Sarah Kerr* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

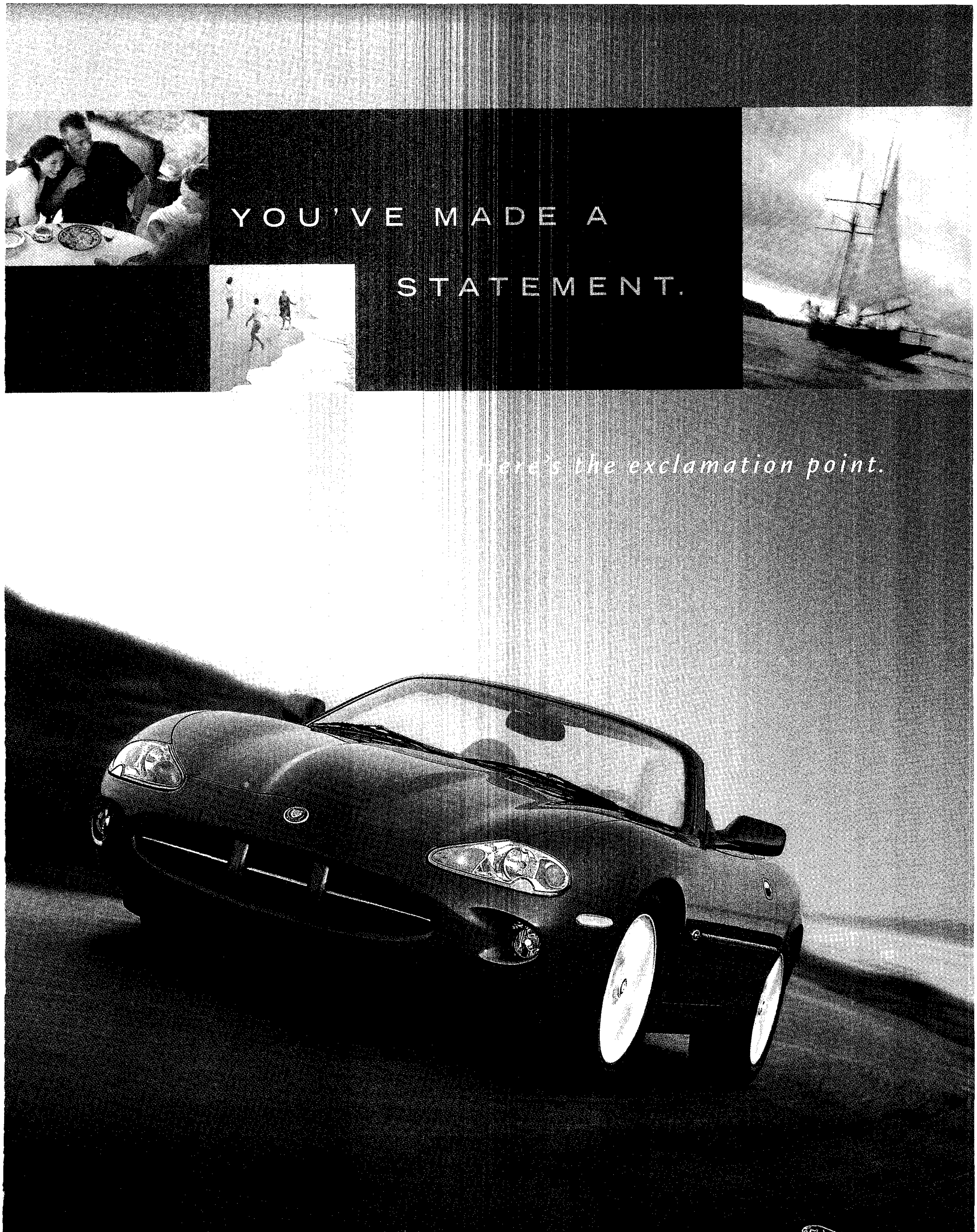
The Cruise—Timothy Levitch, a New York City tour-bus guide, is profiled in this documentary that is basically a seventy-six-minute rant about what Levitch sees and what he thinks of his life in the city. Director Bennett Miller films him as a tourist would with a video camera—that is to say, poorly—but Levitch's rich use of poetic language and imagery provides a strong counterpart. If Levitch seems a little unhinged at times—there's a desperation and ugliness to some of his musings that is disturbing to watch—he's still a fascinating, delusional raconteur. His travelogue is never glib, and often very funny.—*Bruce Diones* (Angelika Film Center; starting Oct. 23.)

A Dog's Life (1918)—The graceful chemistry between Charlie Chaplin's Tramp and a terrier mongrel named Scraps makes this one of the most sublime half hours you'll ever spend in a theatre. Like his later "The Kid" (except briefer and blither), it's one of those Chaplin comedies that captures poetry in motion *and* emotion. The terpsichorean slapstick revolves around a girl (Edna Purviance), two surly mugs, and a wallet. Scraps, a white-coated fellow with a patch over one eye, is both unactorly and adorable, and Chaplin himself is at his most spontaneous.—*Michael Sragow* (Symphony Space; Oct. 25.)

For a Few Dollars More (1965)—When Sergio Leone fabricated the Old West on location in Spain, he performed a sort of reverse plastic surgery on the face of mythical America, adding scars, stubble, and terrifying expressions of emptiness. The spaghetti Western existed before Leone, but he popularized it internationally with three gleefully rabid adventures that turned a TV actor named Clint Eastwood into a movie star. Leone, who once referred to Eastwood as "a mask of wax," dressed him in a poncho, stuck a cheroot between his lips, and came up with an antiheroic icon: the Man with No Name. This middle entry in Leone's Eastwood trilogy co-stars the courtly yet ominous Lee Van Cleef. He and Eastwood play bounty hunters who eventually join forces against a mad-dog bandit chieftain played by a volcanic Gian Maria Volonte. This may be the best in the series, thanks to its balance of grungy humor and visual virtuosity—and to its perfect payoff sequence.—*M.S.* (Symphony Space; Nov. 3.)

Frankenstein (1931)—Probably the most famous of all horror films, and one of the best. It was not the first version of the Mary Shelley novel (there had been a "Frankenstein" as early as 1910), but this version, directed by James Whale, with Boris Karloff as the sad, lumbering Monster and Colin Clive as the high-strung, tormented Dr. Frankenstein, caught the imagination of a large public—and has held it for decades.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum 2; Oct. 30-Nov. 1.)

Happiness—The new film from Todd Solondz, who found fame with "Welcome to the Dollhouse." This time he broadens his range, moving from one unhappy youngster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to three generations of frustrated moaners. The Jordans (Ben Gazzara and Louise Lasser) are ending their frayed marriage, while their daughters (Jane Adams, Lara Flynn Boyle, and Cynthia Stevenson) look wearily for love, and their respectable son-in-law (Dylan Baker) dreams of slaughter and plans his molestation of underage boys. Just an ordinary day in New Jersey, as far as Solondz is concerned, but his obsession with sexual aberration somehow flattens his roster of characters into uniformity; when the large, kindly Kristina (Camryn Manheim) turns out to have dismembered her doorman and frozen his body parts, you can hardly be bothered to take offense. There are plenty of coolly delivered shocks here, but they seem to be muffled by the prevailing glumness: welcome to the doghouse.—*A.L.* (10/19/98) (Angelika Film Center, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 19th Street East 6.)

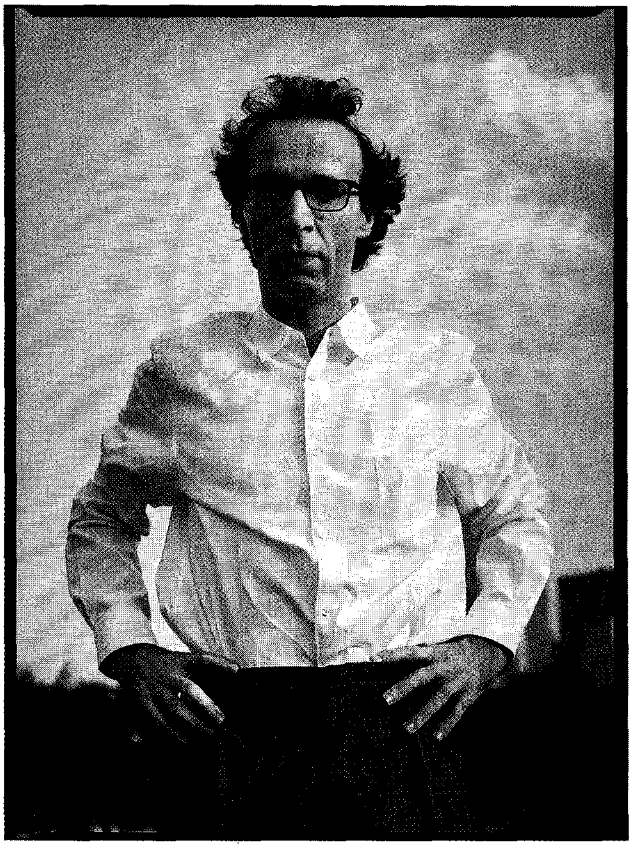
The Impostors—A gross miscalculation from writer-director Stanley Tucci. The movie's very first joke bombs (it's time to retire the ten-spoonfuls-of-sugar-in-the-coffee-cup gag), and so do those that follow. Tucci and Oliver Platt play a couple of struggling actors in nineteen-thirties New York who get caught up in a wacky shipboard adventure. Tucci imports a number of comic styles—silent film, Marx Brothers, farce, even "Godot"-like absurdism—and fails to make any of them work. He loves his impressive roster of actors—including Alfred Molina, Campbell Scott, Lili Taylor, and an uncredited Woody Allen—but loves too well and not wisely: many of the scenes appear to be the result of undisciplined improvisation, and nobody comes out looking good.—*K.M.* (Angelika Film Center, Cinema II, Lincoln Square, and 19th Street East 6.)

The Inheritors—An Austrian film, set in the nineteen-thirties, that with humor and not *too* much heavy-handedness explores the notion of justice from various angles. When their misanthropic landlord is murdered, some meek peasants inherit the earth—at least the patch of it they'd previously toiled on for his profit. Their initial stupefaction soon turns into a taste for the complex flavors of freedom, as they squabble and then unite against the malevolent schemes of neighboring landowners to take their farm away. The murder plot and the winningly played characters keep the focus on the foreground, and the untalky script belies the fact that this is director Stefan Ruzowitzky's second feature. In German.—*Jeff Gustavson* (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Lenny Bruce: Swear to Tell the Truth—Robert Weide's affectionate if slightly tame tribute to the martyred comedian features rare TV appearances, as well as interviews with his daughter, his bodacious ex-wife, and his free-spirited mother. The documentary sheds new light on Bruce's early career as an apolitical mimic; once he becomes a furious satirist, it shows the stresses of stardom, drugs, and censorship taking a sad physical toll. Curiously, the film slows down near the end, when Bruce goes on trial in Manhattan for obscenity.—*S.K.* (Film Forum; Oct. 21-Nov. 3.)

The Mighty—Peter Chelsom's movie is about two boys. One of them, the smart and inventive Kevin (Kieran Culkin), is crippled by a degenerative disease; the other, the slow and wretched Maxwell (Elden Henson), is twice Kevin's size and barely able to look the world in the face. The long and the short of it is that they join forces and make a fine team, winning respect at school and solving the perilous problem of Max's vicious father. Running through their tale is an unlikely Arthurian motif; once Max has hoisted Kevin onto his shoulders, they picture themselves as a single unit—a heroic knight on horseback. Chelsom overdoes their dream, flashing all too often, and too obviously, to shots of real knights in armor; you need the wildness of a Terry Gilliam to make this kind of conceit work. The film threatens to become heavy; what rescues it is the rough and lively performances of the kids, and of Sharon Stone, who makes the most of her supporting role as Kevin's bravely beleaguered mother. With a gonzo cast that includes Gillian Anderson and Meat Loaf.—*A.L.* (Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

The Old Dark House (*1932*)—This wonderful deadpan takeoff of horror plays was directed by the eccentric James Whale in the witty, perverse, and creepy manner he also brought to "The Bride of Frankenstein." Five travellers (Charles Laughton, Melvyn Douglas, Raymond Massey, Gloria Stuart, and Lilian Bond) are caught in a storm in Wales. They seek shelter in a gloomy mansion, which is inhabited by a prize collection of monsters and decadent aristocrats; a mute, scarred brute of a butler (Boris Karloff) attends a prissy madman (Ernest Thesiger), his religious-fanatic hag of a sister (Eva Moore), his pyromaniac-dwarf younger brother (Brember Wells), and their father—a hundred-and-two-year-old baronet. (The performer is listed as "John Dudgeon," but the part is actually played by a woman, Elspeth Dudgeon.)—*P.K.* (Film Forum 2; Nov. 3.)



Opening Oct. 23, Roberto Benigni in "Life Is Beautiful."

MAX VADUKUL

One Tough Cop—Director Bruno Barreto and actor Stephen Baldwin make an honorable attempt to return to the world of gritty police dramas like "Serpico," but they ignore the fact that stuff like this is done well each week on TV shows like "NYPD Blue." The film, about the real-life New York detective Bo Dietl (Baldwin) and his partner (Chris Penn) and the problems that develop with a crime-family friend (Michael McGlone), allows the actors plenty of room to create characters that are rich in urban angst, but the material is too familiar to give off much heat. Baldwin has bulked up for the role and delivers a quietly centered performance that gives the movie what little surprise it has.—*B.D.* (Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, State, and Village East Cinemas.)

Pink Flamingos (1972)—Produced, directed, written, and filmed by John Waters, and guaranteed to offend every taste. Divine is obscenely funny as "the filthiest person alive," living under the name Babs Johnson in a trailer in Phoenix, Maryland, with her mother, Edie (Edith Massey), the extremely lovable Egg Lady; Cotton (Mary Vivian Pearce), who reads "Humpty-Dumpty" to Edie; and Babs's son, Crackers (Danny Mills), whose sexual appetites are, well, catholic. Connie and Raymond Marble (Mink Stole and David Lochary) do everything conceivable to strip Divine of her title—keep slaves, sell babies, deposit waste products in the mail—but they don't have a chance. Lewis Carroll could have written the mock trial at the end, if he had been criminally insane.—*Mary Norris* (American Museum of the Moving Image; Oct. 24.)

Ronin—A tense return to form, and to France, by director John Frankenheimer. Decades after "The Train" and "French Connection II," he takes us to Paris and the Riviera, and to the murky mission that's been assigned to a bunch of freelance spies; these are played by Robert De Niro, Jean Reno, Stellan Skarsgård, Sean Bean, and Skipp Sudduth, while the object of the assignment is played with grace and wit by a large suitcase. All they have to do, under the guidance of a young Irishwoman (Natascha McElhone), is steal the case; the movie derives its peculiar flavor from the combination of that simple task and the furtive, fateful complications that cluster around it.—*A.L.* (Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Metro Cinema, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

Slam—The acclaim for Marc Levin's prison-and-poetry drama (it won prizes at both Sundance and Cannes) is mystifying: it has some nice handheld camerawork and an affecting performance by newcomer Saul Williams, but the story, about a young poet's rise to self-awareness, lacks the tough center that a good script can provide. The seemingly improvised dialogue and the cinéma-vérité presentation are meandering and unconvincing—like a mixture of a public-television prison documentary and a student film of an open-mike night.—*B.D.* (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

What Dreams May Come—Robin Williams gives his most cloying performance in this eighty-million-dollar acid-trip fantasy about the pursuit of love in the afterlife. The hyper-romantic script—pure drivel—is by the successful and overrated Ron Bass ("Rain Man," "Waiting to Exhale"), and his story about an accident victim's search for his dead wife's soul reeks of New Age sensitivity training. Though director Vincent Ward used his special-effects budget well—there are some stunning impressionistic moments—the film is as gooey and sticky as an overcooked marshmallow.—*B.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East, Village Theatre VII, and Ziegfeld.)

ALSO PLAYING

All the Rage: Quad Cinema. . . . **Clay Pigeons:** Lincoln Square, New York Twin, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **Holy Man:** Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Embassy 1, Mur-

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ray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Sutton, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **LOLITA** (reviewed in our issue of 2/23-3/2/98): Angelika Film Center, Cinema 3rd Avenue, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **NEXT STOP WONDERLAND:** Gotham Cinema, 62nd & Broadway, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **A NIGHT AT THE ROXBURY:** Art Greenwich Twin, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Olympia, State, and 34th Street Showplace. . . . **ONE TRUE THING** (9/28/98): First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, State, and Waverly. . . . **PECKER:** Angelika Film Center, 19th Street East 6, and Regency. . . . **PERMANENT MIDNIGHT** (9/28/98): Eastside Playhouse, Lincoln Square, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **PRACTICAL MAGIC:** Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, New York Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **ROUNDERS:** First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **RUSH HOUR:** Astor Plaza, Chelsea West, 84th Street Sixplex, Metro Cinema, Murray Hill Cinemas, Orpheum VII, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **LA SENTINELLE:** Quad Cinema. . . . **THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY:** Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, East 85th Street, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, and Village East Cinemas. . . . **TOUCH OF EVIL** (9/21/98): Film Forum. . . . **URBAN LEGEND:** Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 64th and 2nd, and Village Theatre VII. . . . **YOUR FRIENDS & NEIGHBORS** (8/24-31/98): First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 19th Street East 6.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St.
ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at Broadway.
BEEKMAN, Second Ave. at 66th St.
CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd St.
CHELSEA WEST, 333 W. 23rd St.
CINEMA I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CORONET CINEMAS, Third Ave. at 59th St.
CRITERION CENTER, Broadway at 44th St.
EAST 85TH STREET, First Ave. at 85th St.
EASTSIDE PLAYHOUSE, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84TH STREET SIXPLEX, Broadway at 84th St.
86TH STREET EAST TWIN, Third Ave. at 86th St.
EMBASSY 1, 2, AND 3, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th St.
FILM FORUM, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd St.
GOTHAM CINEMA, Third Ave. at 58th St.
GUILD, 33 W. 50th St.
LINCOLN PLAZA CINEMAS, Broadway at 63rd St.
LINCOLN SQUARE, Broadway at 68th St.
METRO CINEMA 1 AND 2, Broadway at 99th St.
MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th St.
NEW YORK TWIN, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19TH STREET EAST 6, Broadway at 19th St.
OLYMPIA I AND II, Broadway at 107th St.
ORPHEUM VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
PARIS, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th St.
QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th St.
REGENCY, Broadway at 67th St.
THE SCREENING ROOM, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd St.
64TH AND 2ND, Second Ave. at 64th St.
72ND STREET EAST, Third Ave. at 71st St.
STATE, Broadway at 45th St.
SUTTON 1 AND 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th St.
VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, Second Ave. at 12th St.
VILLAGE THEATRE VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
WAVERLY 1 AND 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

FILM FORUM 2 AND 3, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—**THEATRE 2:** Through Oct. 29 (except Oct. 26): "Don't Look Now" (1973, Nicolas Roeg). . . . ¶ Oct. 30-Nov. 1: "Frankenstein" (†) and "The Bride of Frankenstein" (1935, James Whale). . . . ¶ Nov. 3: "The Phantom of the Opera" (1925, Rupert Julian; silent) and "The Old Dark House" (†). . . . ¶ A program of Buster Keaton films. Oct. 26: "College" (1927, James Horne; silent) and three short films, "The Love Nest" (1923; silent), "The Goat" (1921; silent), and "The Scarecrow" (1920; silent). . . . Nov. 2: "Sherlock Jr." (1923, Keaton; silent) and "Go West" (1925, Keaton; silent). . . . **THEATRE 3:** "Touch of Evil" (†).

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—A program of films by G. W. Pabst. Oct. 22 at 2:30: "Mademoiselle Docteur" (1936; in French, no English subtitles). . . . Oct. 22 at 6 and Oct. 24 at 2: "Paracelsus" (1943; in German). . . . Oct. 23 at 2:30 and Oct. 24 at 5: "Komödianten" (1941; in German). . . . Oct. 23 at 6: "The Threepenny Opera" (1931; in French, with no English subtitles), with Albert Préjean. . . . Oct. 23 at 8: "The Threepenny Opera" (1931; in German), with Rudolf Forster. . . . Oct. 25 at 2 and Oct. 26 at 6: "The Trial" (1947; in German, with no English subtitles). . . . Oct. 25 at 5 and Oct. 26 at 2:30: "The Last Ten Days of Hitler" (1955; in German, with no English subtitles). . . . Oct. 27 at 2:30: "A Modern Hero" (1934). . . . Oct. 29 at 2:30 and Oct. 31 at 5: "The Voice of Silence" (1952; in Italian, with no English subtitles). . . . Oct. 30-31 at 2:30: "Through the Forests, Through the Fields" (1956; in German, with no English subtitles). . . . Oct. 30 at 6:30: "Don Quixote" (1938). . . . Oct. 30 at 8: "Shanghai Drama" (1938; in French). . . . ¶ Oct. 22 and Oct. 29 at 6: Two programs in a series about the history of 8-mm. film and video in the United States. . . . ¶ Oct. 22 at 6:30 and Oct. 23 at 6: "The Day You'll Love Me" (1997, Leandro Katz). . . . ¶ Oct. 23 at 6 and 8 and Oct. 24-25 at 2:30 and 5: Five programs of films celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of Third World Newsreel. . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 6:30: "Hallelujah! Ron Athey: A Story of Deliverance" (1998, Catherine Gund), a documentary. . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 3: "Film About a Woman Who" (1974, Yvonne Rainer). . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 6: "Broken Blossoms" (1919, D.W. Griffith; silent). . . . ¶ Oct. 27 at 6:30: "Fuses" (1965, Carolee Schneemann) and "Misconception" (1977, Marjorie Keller). . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 6: "Inspirations" (1997, Michael Apted). . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 6:30 and Oct. 30 at 3: "Aldous Huxley: The Gravity of Light" (1997, Oliver Hockenhull), a documentary. . . . ¶ Oct. 30 at 6:30: "Frank Lloyd Wright' (1998, Ken Burns and Lynn Novick), a documentary. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 2: "The Life of Oharu" (1952, Kenji Mizoguchi; in Japanese). . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 5: "Utamaro and His Five Women" (1946, Mizoguchi; in Japanese).

WALTER READE THEATRE, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Oct. 21 and Oct. 23 at 2, 4:30, 7, and 9:30 and Oct. 24 at 4:15: "Destiny" (1997, Youssef Chahine; in Arabic). . . . ¶ Oct. 24-25 at 2: "Searching for Bobby Fischer" (1993, Steven Zaillian). . . . ¶ A program of films from Israel; in Hebrew, with English subtitles. Oct. 24 at 7:30: "Avanti Popolo" (1986, Rafi Bukaee). . . . Oct. 24 at 9:30 and Oct. 31 at 6:15: "My Michael" (1975, Dan Wolman). . . . Oct. 25 at 4:15 and Oct. 27 at 2: "Sabra" (1933, Aleksandr Ford). . . . Oct. 25 at 6:30: "The Smile of the Lamb" (1986, Shimon Dotan). . . . Oct. 25 at 8:45: "Esther" (1985, Amos Gitai). . . . Oct. 26 at 2 and 6:15 and Oct. 27 at 4: "Tent City" (1951, Aryeh Lahola) and "Avoda" (1930, Helmar Lurski). . . . Oct. 26 at 4 and 8:15: "They Were Ten" (1960, Baruch Dienar). . . . Oct. 29 at 2 and 9: "Sallah Shabati" (1964, Ephraim Kishon). . . . Oct. 29 and Oct. 31 at 4: "Casablan" (1962, Larry Frisch). . . . Oct. 30 at 2 and 6:15 and Oct. 31 at 8:30: "Hole in the Moon" (1965, Uri Zohar). . . . Oct. 30 at 4 and 8:15 and Nov. 1 at 7:30: "I Love You Rosa" (1972, Moshe Mizrahi). . . . Nov. 1 at 4:30: "Life of Jews in Palestine" (1913; silent) and "Shivat Zion" (1921, Jaacov Ben Dov; silent). . . . Nov. 1 at 9:15 and Nov. 2 at 2 and 6:15: "Last Summer Blues" (1986, Renan Schorr). . . . Nov. 2 at 4 and 8:15: "Black Banana" (1976, Ben Hayeem). . . . Nov. 3 at 2 and 6: "Hide and Seek" (1980, Wolman). . . . Nov. 3 at 4: "Paratroopers" (1977, Yehuda Ne'eman). . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 6:30: "Drylongso" (1998, Cauleen Smith). . . . ¶ Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at 2: "An American Tail" (1986, Don Bluth). . . . ¶ Nov. 3 at 8: "Wife! Be Like a Rose!" (1935, Mikio Naruse; in Japanese).

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—A program of films directed by John Waters. Oct. 24 at 2: "Pink Flamingos" (†). . . . Oct. 24 at 4: "Multiple Maniacs" (1970). . . . Oct. 25 at 2: "Hairspray" (1988). . . . Oct. 25 at 5: "Female Trouble" (1974). . . . Oct. 31 at 2: "Serial Mom" (1994). . . . Nov. 1 at 2: "Desperate Living" (1977). . . . Nov. 1 at 4: "Cry-Baby" (1990). . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 4: "Of Unknown Origin" (1983, George Pan Cosmatos).

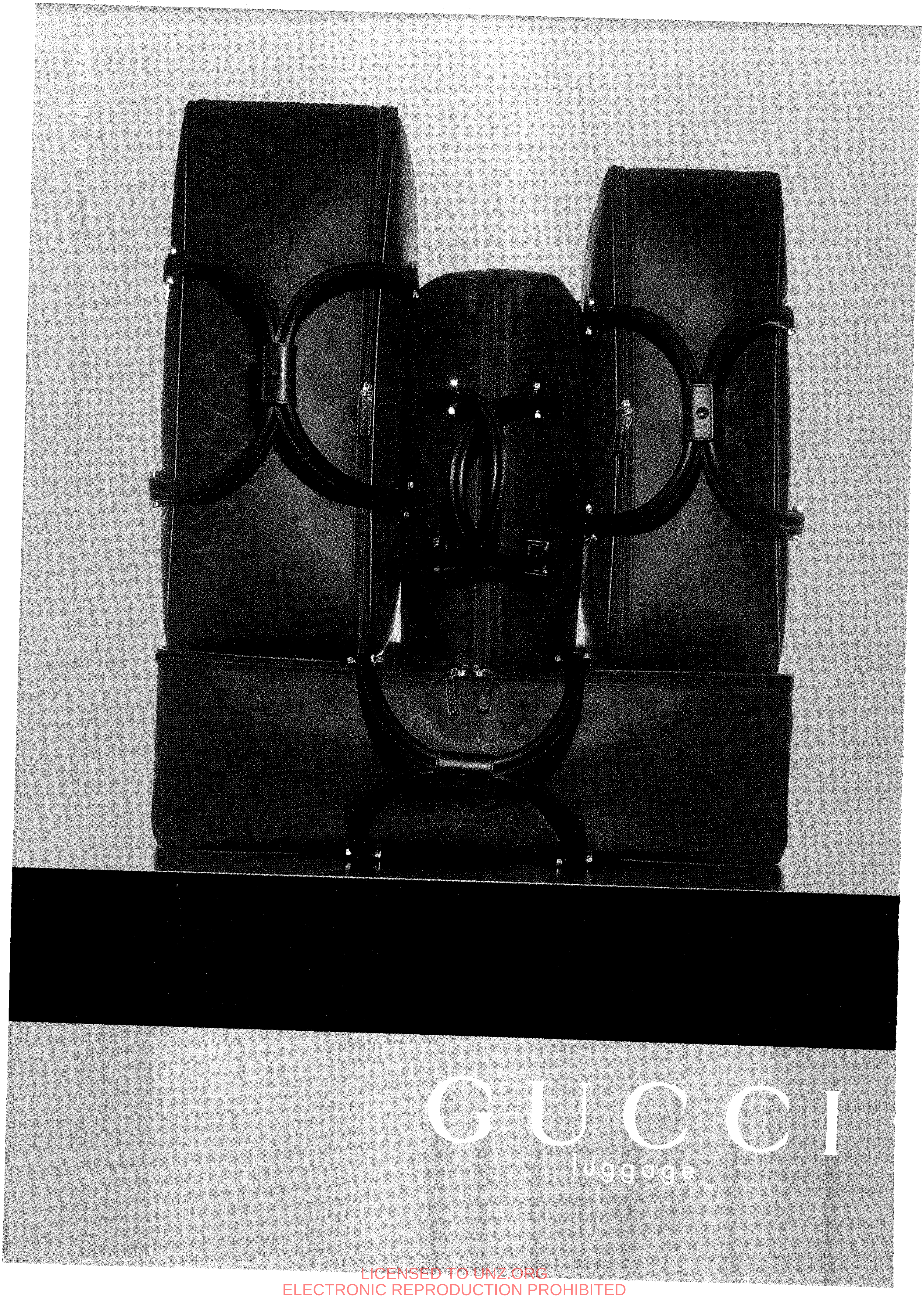
FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—A retrospective (through Dec. 22) of films featuring Catherine Deneuve. Oct. 27 at 12:30, 4, and 7:30: "Indochine" (1992, Régis Wargnier; in French). . . . Nov. 3 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Belle de Jour" (1967, Luis Buñuel; in French).

SYMPHONY SPACE, Broadway at 95th St. (864-5400)—Oct. 25, from noon to 5: Continuous showings of seven short silent films by Charlie Chaplin, including "A Dog's Life" (†). . . . Oct. 25 at 6: "City Lights" (1931, Chaplin; silent). . . . Oct. 25 at 7:45: "Monsieur Verdoux" (1947, Chaplin). . . . ¶ A program of films made by United Artists. Oct. 27 at 7: "Sparrows" (1926, William Beaudine; silent). . . . Oct. 27 at 8:30: "Lili Marleen" (1980, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German). . . . Nov. 3 at 7: "Man of the West" (1958, Anthony Mann). . . . Nov. 3 at 9: "For a Few Dollars More" (†).

A DIFFERENT LIGHT BOOKSTORE, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On Oct. 25 at 7, the feature will be "The Hunger" (1983, Tony Scott); on Nov. 1 at 7, "Jubilee Trail" (1954, Joseph Kane).

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3587)—A program of French films, 1958-98; in French, with English subtitles. Oct. 21 at 2:30 and Oct. 23 at 7:30: "Level 5" (1996, Chris Marker). . . . Oct. 23 at 2:30: "Passion" (1982, Jean-Luc Godard). . . . Oct 24 at 2:30 and Oct. 28 at 6: "Boyfriends and Girlfriends" (1987, Eric Rohmer). . . . Oct. 24 at 7:30 and Oct. 30 at 2:30: "Contempt" (1963, Godard). . . . Oct. 28 at 2:30 and Oct. 30 at 7:30: "Othon" (1971, Danièle Huillet and Jean-Larie Straub). . . . Oct. 31 at 2:30: "Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting' (1978, Raúl Ruiz) and "Le Camion" (1977, Marguerite Duras). . . . Oct. 31 at 7:30: "The Green Room" (1978, François Truffaut).

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—A program of films from Mexico directed by Arturo Ripstein; in Spanish, with English subtitles. Oct. 22 at 6 and Oct. 30 at 9:30: "The Queen of the Night" (1993). . . . Oct. 23 at 6 and Oct. 26 at 8:30: "The Castle of Purity" (1972). . . . Oct. 23 at 9:45 and Oct. 31 at 6: "Woman of the Port" (1991). . . . Oct. 24 at 1:30 and Oct. 27 at 9:30: "The Holy Office" (1973). . . . Oct. 24 at 5:30 and Oct. 28 at 6: "The Beginning and the End" (1993). . . . Oct. 25 at 6:15 and Oct. 28 at 9:30: "In for Life" (1978). . . . Oct. 25 at 8:30 and Oct. 30 at 7: "Hell Without Limits" (1977). . . . Oct. 26 at 6: "The Realm of Fortune" (1985). . . . Oct. 27 and Oct. 29 at 7: "Pious Lies" (1988). . . . Oct. 29 at 9 and Oct. 31 at 8:30: "Deep Crimson" (1996).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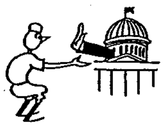
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT

Waking up to the next war.



If you listened to Congolese state radio in recent months, you may have heard a voice instructing the people to take up arms—"machetes, spears, arrows, hoes, spades, rakes, nails, truncheons, irons, barbed wire, stones, and the like"—and "kill the Rwandan Tutsis." You may have caught this advisory: "Wherever you see a Rwandan Tutsi, regard him as your enemy." You may have heard an Army commander instructing the general public to "be ferocious," and "detect the enemies, and massacre them without mercy." Listening to these messages, you might have thought you were hearing reruns of the broadcasts that flooded Rwanda during the genocide of 1994, when radio cheerleaders helped spur members of that country's Hutu majority to slaughter an average of at least eight thousand Tutsis a day for a hundred days. But no. This is happening right now in the Congo: hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Tutsis or persons suspected of being Tutsis have been rounded up or hunted down, in the streets or in door-to-door searches, by government forces and vigilante mobs, and tens of thousands have fled the country as refugees. You may even have heard President Laurent-Désiré Kabila on your radio, calling for one and all to unite in fighting this "people's war."

This is the same Kabila, of course, who was installed in power last year by a rebel alliance spearheaded by Rwanda's predominantly Tutsi Army. Back then, Kabila's fiercest enemies were tens of thousands of fugitive Rwandan Hutu *génocidaires*, who had been flushed out of the old United Nations-run refugee camps in the eastern Congo. And just last spring, in Uganda, he was one of six African heads of state who joined President Clinton in signing a pledge to combat the resurgent genocide being visited on much of central Africa by the still rampant Rwandan Hutu army and militias of 1994. Now Kabila has switched sides, making common cause with his former Rwandan enemies against his former Rwandan allies, and the Congo is once again embroiled in a terrible war.

The fighting, which began in early August, when much of Kabila's Army bolted in a rebellion backed by Rwanda and Uganda, now involves the armies of at least half a dozen African countries, along with as many semi-autonomous guerrilla movements. Susan Rice, our Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, ranks the present clash in the Congo as "potentially among the most dangerous" wars on earth today, and there is no disputing her. Not since Europe last laid waste to itself, in the nineteen-forties, have so many warring parties converged on a single vast field of battle. Kabila, who was rescued from defeat by the armies of Angola and Zimbabwe, has recruited to his defense a coalition of the worst political forces that central Africa has to offer: Rwandan *génocidaires*, Sudanese holy warriors, and Ugandan rebels from the Lord's Resistance Army, which kidnaps schoolchildren to fill its ranks. The rebels even claim to have captured one of Idi Amin's sons, who had been commanding pro-Kabila troops in the Congo.

That Kabila is a rogue comes as no great surprise. He has long conducted himself like a museum-quality specimen of the African strongman—monomaniacal, brutish, full of swagger, empty of principle. He is certainly a political grotesque. But it is a little misleading to call him a strongman, because what defines him above all is the fact that he is weak; and everything that he has done or failed to do, with his seemingly endless capacity for abusing power, suggests that he knows it. When he speaks now of his desire to wipe Tutsis off the face of central Africa as a popular war, it is a reminder that he himself is not popular and cannot count on his Army to defend him. So, to counter an invasion from the east, he has invited invasion from every other direction, and has turned his country into an all-purpose African battlefield. When Kabila's despised predecessor, Mobutu Sese Seko, got through with it, the vast, resource-rich Congo existed as a coherent nation-state only on the map, and Kabila now appears determined to render even the map meaningless.

Seven months ago, President Clin-

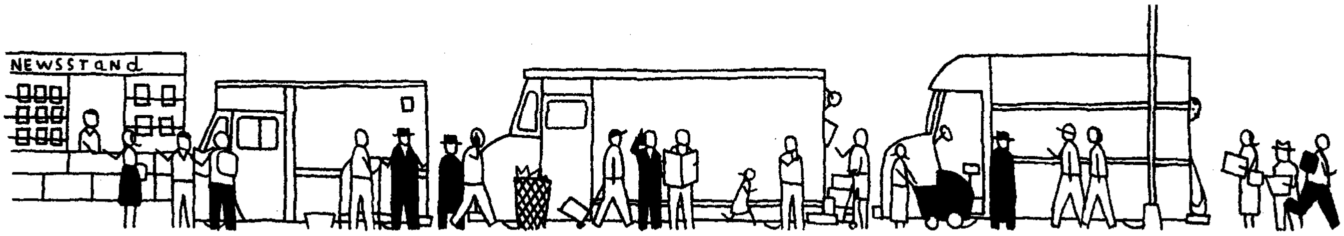


ILLUSTRATION BY LAURENT CILLUFFO

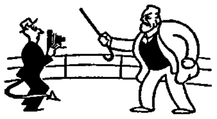
ton was winging through Africa, proclaiming a hopeful new age of American partnership, apologizing to Rwanda for shutting his eyes and sitting on his hands during the genocide of 1994, and saying that such regional violence does, after all, matter to the whole world, because "each bloodletting hastens the next" and "as the value of human life is degraded and violence becomes tolerated, the unimaginable becomes more conceivable." Now Susan Rice warns Congress that "millions" of lives are at risk in the Congo, but her alarm peters out into a void. Washington is too mesmerized by its own self-inflicted, self-indulgent folly to care. The United Nations, too, appears to prefer to ignore what is happening. A few weeks ago, Rwanda's foreign minister asked the General Assembly to take measures against the Kabila regime because it "incites the populace to genocide, to massacres, and to racial and ethnic hatred." The General Assembly heard him out, and that was that. After all, the U.N. itself is in an awkward position. For the past year and a half, its refugee agency has fed and sheltered the Rwandan Hutu *génocidaires* who now serve as Kabila's shock troops. So Africa is left to its own devices, and the "international community" becomes a global nullity.

As the fighting builds in the Congo, diplomatic mediation efforts proliferate across the continent. Even President Muammar Qaddafi, of Libya, has put forward a plan for an all-African peacekeeping force. But as long as genocide remains part of the equation in today's great trans-African war, there can be no meaningful peace—just the next war.

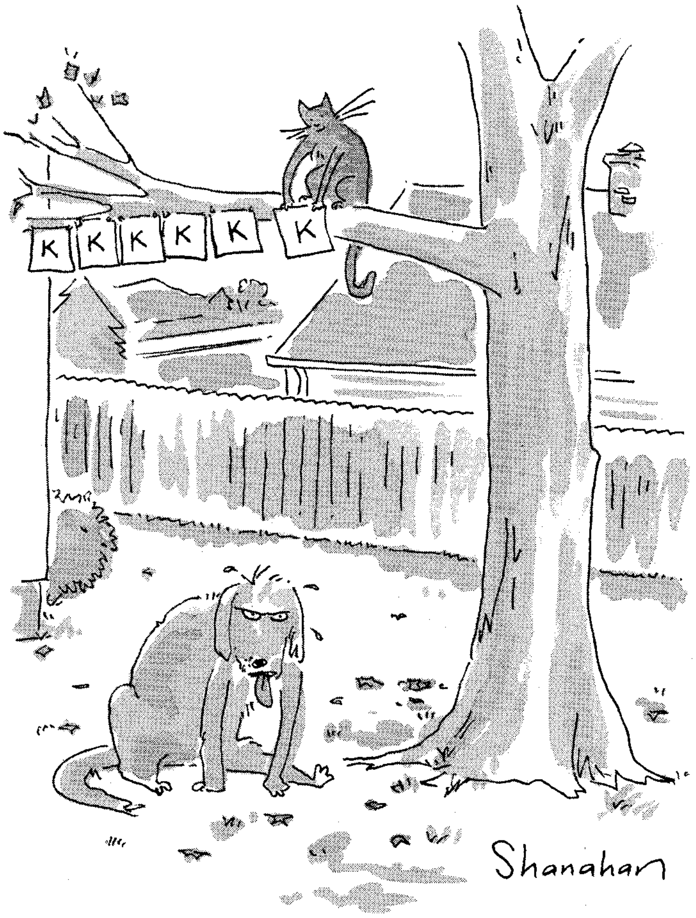
—PHILIP GOUREVITCH

DEPT. OF NYAH-NYAHS

D'Amato and Schumer perfect the etiquette of the attack ad.



IN the lower-left corner of Representative Charles Schumer's television ads, there is a grainy black-and-white photograph of his rival for New York's Senate seat, Alphonse D'Amato. In the upper-left corner of Senator D'Amato's ads, there is a grainy black-and-white photograph of Representative Schumer. To be charitable, neither of these pictures is very flattering, and they are not meant to be: Schumer, with his fussy-looking pursed lips and heavy-lidded eyes, resembles a nosy night clerk in some no-tell motel; and D'Amato can finally pass as the kind of low-life street punk he impersonated in 1986 when he and Rudy Giuliani "went undercover" on a police drug bust-cum-photo opportunity.



BLACK-AND-WHITE tends to signal glamour in fashion photography, but it means something different in campaign ads. "The reason you use black-and-white is so that the pictures look like police mug shots," Frank Luntz, a Republican political consultant, told me the other day. The idea is to make your political rival look as nasty as the names you are calling him in your attack ads. New York's Senate race is particularly vitriolic this year, with Schumer's ads calling D'Amato a liar, and D'Amato's ads essentially characterizing his rival as a deadbeat.

The visual grammar of the images is pretty standard. Your opponent's face should have some combination of the following elements: a five-o'clock shadow, half-closed eye or eyes (or that attractive deer-caught-in-the-headlights look), and an open mouth. Henry Sheinkopf, a Democratic political consultant who worked for Bill Clinton in 1996 and who, this season, is advising Eliot Spitzer in his campaign for New York State Attorney General, says that the photographs are chosen very carefully. "You take a regular color photo and you gray it up, decolorize it, so it becomes more sinister," Sheinkopf explained. "You're trying to make the guy look like someone you don't want in your home for dinner, someone you wouldn't want to go for an unsupervised walk with your children." Most of the pictures are, as campaign consultants say, "focus-grouped," to make sure they cause an unpleasant reaction.

The reason you make the images small and fuzzy, Frank Luntz explained, is "to force the voter to look closely at the TV to see who you're talking about. You want the voter to have to concen-

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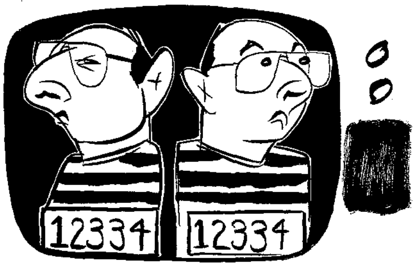
trate." To concentrate, that is, on someone you don't want him to like. To burn that sleazy mug on the voter's retina. But you don't want to make the picture too awful. Jeffrey Pollack, a Democratic consultant, said, "You can't use one where the candidate is caught picking his nose, or it'll backfire. Viewers will say, 'I don't trust the guy running this ad.' Ugly but not nauseating—that's the standard."

Using black-and-white to connote villainy is as old as scrawling a mustache on your opponent's campaign poster. Hubert Humphrey's 1968 campaign used glowering black-and-white images of the man with the most famous five-o'clock shadow in American history, Richard Nixon. But the newest technique is to renounce black-and-white altogether. Ronald Faucheux, the editor of the magazine *Campaigns & Elections*, notes that some candidates now prefer to show an opponent's full-color, all-smiles campaign portrait in their negative ads, in an attempt to link nasty accusations with the opponent's official, self-chosen image. "It gives the positive image a more negative connotation," Faucheux explained.



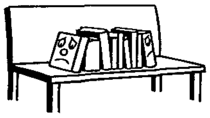
Senator Alphonse D'Amato

Like many attack ads these days, the Schumer and D'Amato advertisements generally keep the candidates making the charges offstage. You don't see much of Al D'Amato in Al D'Amato's anti-Schumer ads. This riles a lot of good-government types, like the people at the Alliance for Better Campaigns, in Washington, an organization that has urged all candidates to appear in their own attack ads. Some politicians have even taken a pledge to appear in their own negative ads. "If you're going to sling the mud," New Jersey Governor Christine Whitman, who supports the proposal, said recently, "at least carry your own bucket."

—RICHARD STENGEL

BIG BOOKS 101

Settling the question of whether "Ulysses" was ever a page-turner.



When, earlier this year, "Ulysses" was nominated by the Modern Library as the greatest novel of the twentieth century, it was simultaneously nominated by the postmodern public as the greatest unread novel of the twentieth century. A forthcoming exhibition of personally inscribed first editions of the book seems to provide empirical evidence confirming at least the latter characterization: of the twenty-four copies that will be on display, several have what book dealers call unopened pages—pages that have not been sliced open by an eager reader. Could it be that even some of Joyce's intimates and supporters couldn't get through the thing?

One copy of the book in the exhibit was given in 1923 to Eleanor Beach, the mother of Sylvia Beach, who was the owner of the Shakespeare and Company bookstore in Paris and the first publisher of "Ulysses." According to the catalogue notes, it is "virtually unopened after page 117." (That's a few pages into the "Aeolus" episode, in the newspaper office.) Edith Rockefeller, the madcap society heiress, proselytizing Jungian analysand, and onetime Joyce patron, appears to have given up at page 381, halfway through the "Oxen of the Sun" maternity-hospital episode. The copy dedicated to one Baron Ambrogio Ralli, a former English-language student of Joyce's in Trieste, who aided the author's flight at the beginning of the First World War, is largely unopened, as is the one given to Douglas Orbison, an American cousin of Sylvia Beach's, who had tried to raise money for Joyce in the United States. Even the volume belonging to Margaret Anderson, the editor of *The Little Review*, in which sections of "Ulysses" were published in serial form, remains uncracked.

"A number of recipients of the book probably didn't read it," Glenn Horowitz, a rare-books dealer, said the other day in his store on East Seventy-sixth Street, where the exhibition will be taking place. But, Horowitz pointed out, recipients such as Anderson had already read the book in manuscript, so they didn't need to turn the pages of their first editions. Still, there were slackers, he admitted. "Clearly, Mrs. Eleanor Beach never read her book," he said. "Some people ran out of steam. But I don't think they got to a particular page and thought, Oh! Leopold Bloom is counting the stools in the toilet bowl! I think they got to the point where they said, 'Life is too short.'"

The first editions, which cost a pricey fourteen to thirty dollars when they were printed and now go for an exorbitant fifty thousand to two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, were distributed largely to friends or acquaintances who had provided Joyce with professional support, or who still might. Hence the copy to Henry Kaeser, an American publisher who Joyce may have hoped would bring the book out in the United States (he didn't), and the copy to the artist Barnet Braverman, who, the story goes, smuggled copies of "Ulysses" into the country from Canada by stuffing them down his pants.

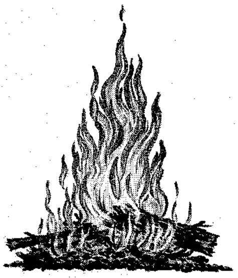
As unconventional as his book was, Joyce apparently didn't go in for quirky inscriptions; usually, he stuck with the dedicatee's name and the place and date

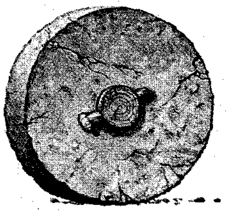
YESES

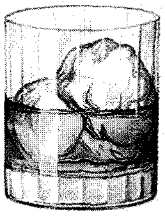
Just behind
the door,
a second.
But smaller
by a few inches.
Behind which
a third again
diminishes.
Then more
and more,
forming a
foreshortened
corridor or
niche of yeses
ending in
a mouse's
entrance
with a knob
too small
to pinch.

—KAY RYAN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL







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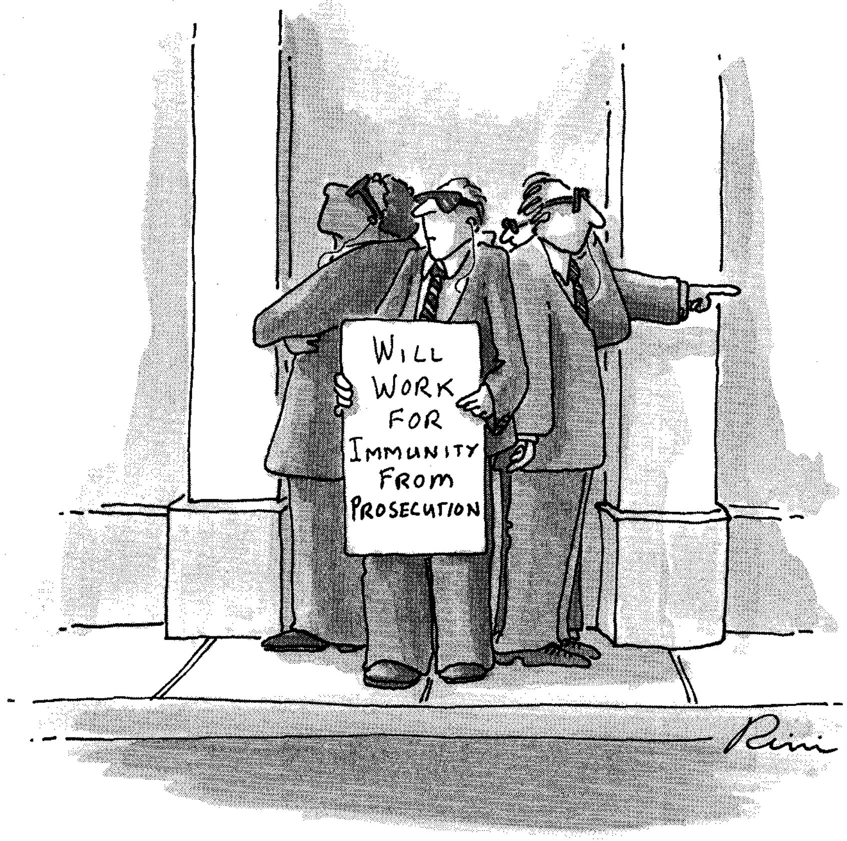

WILL WORK FOR IMMUNITY FROM PROSECUTION

of signing, tossing in the occasional "in token of gratitude." The most fulsome dedications are to other writers. For F. Scott Fitzgerald—who, upon meeting Joyce at a dinner party in 1928, threatened to throw himself out of a fourth-floor window as proof of his admiration for the author—Joyce positively rambled: "Dear Mr. Fitzgerald: Here with is the book you gave me signed and I am adding a portrait of the artist as a once young man with the thanks of your much obliged but most pusillanimous guest." To James Stephens, the Irish storyteller and poet, Joyce inscribed the book "from his twin-colleague and admirer." Joyce had, the catalogue explains, originally disdained Stephens's work but was won over by an unusual factoid: he was told that he and Stephens shared the same birthday, February 2, 1882.

"It transformed his opinions and perceptions," Horowitz said. "He became convinced that Stephens was his doppelgänger, and the potential successor to the authorship of 'Finnegans Wake.'" Unfortunately, Stephens wasn't Joyce's birthday "twin" at all. "He had an extremely checkered upbringing, and he had no idea when he was born," Horowitz said. "But he did nothing to inform Joyce of the misapprehension." Stephens, at least, seems to have read his copy: the only unopened leaf is the last one, a blank. —REBECCA MEAD

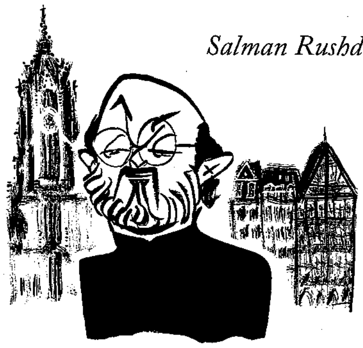
INK

Salman Rushdie has a brief glimpse of freedom.

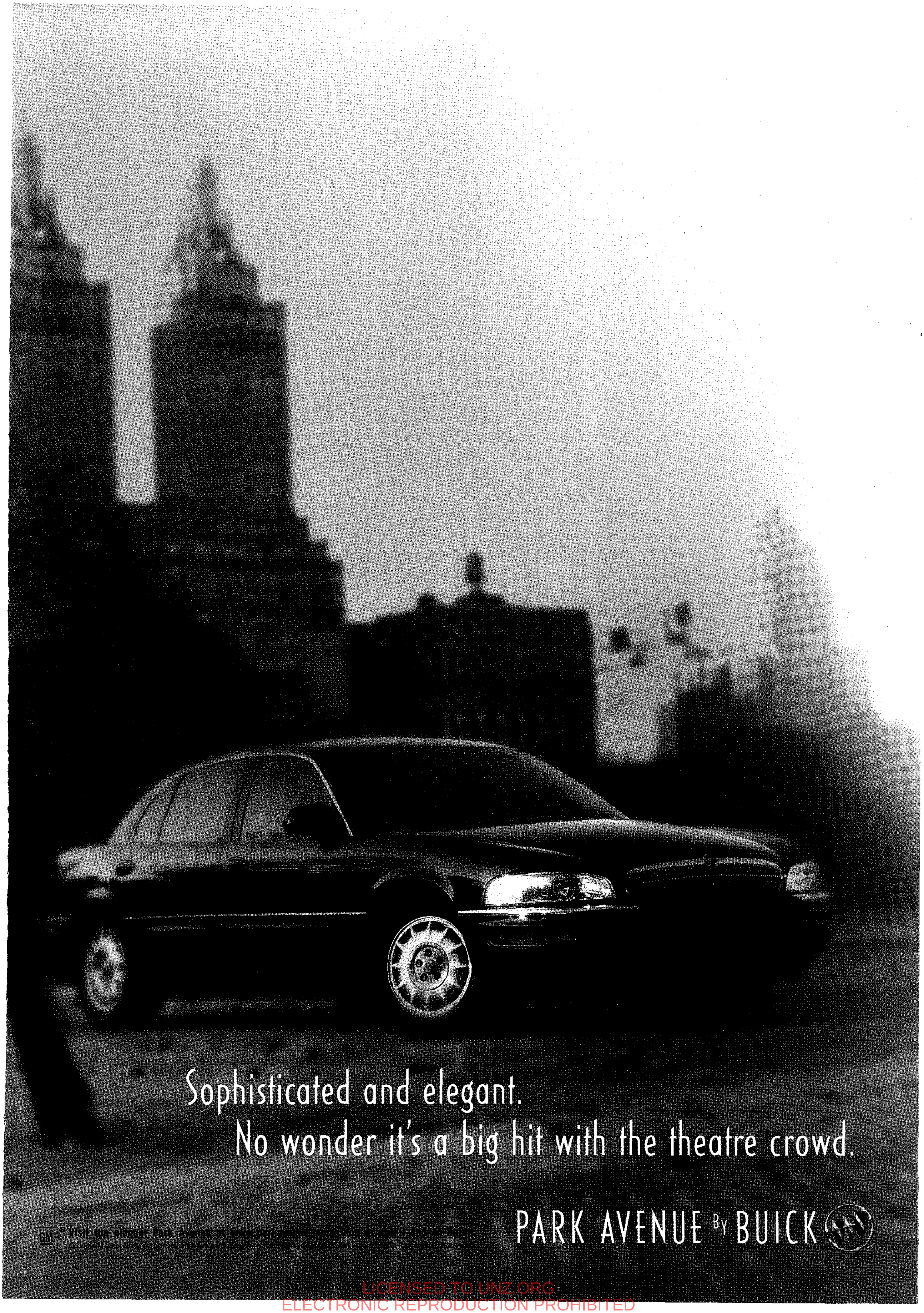
It was a pleasure to happen upon Salman Rushdie wandering through the crowded aisles of the Frankfurt Book Fair a few weeks ago. The night before, there had been a formal dinner in his honor at the Hessischer Hof to celebrate his forthcoming novel, "The Ground Beneath Her Feet"; on this afternoon, however, only the presence of two plainclothesmen lurking nearby hinted that he was anything but an ordinary citizen browsing in the cavernous Festhalle. A few years ago, at a party Rushdie attended in New York, there had been Secret Service men all over the place, muttering into earpieces; there had even been a rumor of snipers on the roof. Now he could just sit in his agent's booth and talk.

"It's nice to be told that there aren't state assassins coming after you," he said. Three weeks earlier, at a United Nations press conference, the fatwa issued in 1989 by the late Ayatollah Khomeini, calling for Rushdie's death, had been formally repudiated by the Iranian government. Full diplomatic relations between Iran and Britain were promptly restored, and Rushdie was once again a free man.

Of course, he hadn't kept a completely low profile over the last decade, despite the Ayatollah's edict. After the first few years, when he was forced to live largely underground, secreted in various London safe houses, he began to surface: he accepted an honorary professorship from M.I.T., making a surprise appearance onstage, and he was often spotted on the London literary circuit. But the danger was real. His Japanese translator was murdered; his Italian translator was beaten and stabbed; his Norwegian publisher was shot and wounded.


Salman Rushdie

Rushdie's response was a kind of circumspect defiance. "They didn't stop me. There's satisfaction in that," he said. "If the purpose was to silence a writer, they didn't silence a writer." He said that the Iranian announcement had taken him completely by surprise: "I heard about it two days before it happened. I don't think anyone expected it. Every Iran-watcher I know said you wouldn't have believed they would stand up on a stage and say these things before the world. It's a huge step. Once you've said the unsayable, it gets easier to go on saying it." Why did he think they had acted now? "It's economically driven. Iran is broke and desperate. They need to stop being an international leper. And Tony Blair made a big difference. He'd always been concerned about my case. I had several highly publicized meetings with him, which sent


Sophisticated and elegant.
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a strong message that the Brits were taking this seriously. The Tories never did that."

In a green checked suit, a woollen vest, and a white shirt open at the neck, Rushdie seemed at once frail and immensely strong. "He wished for fame," Paul Theroux wrote in "Sir Vidia's Shadow," paraphrasing V. S. Naipaul's view of Rushdie. "He became the most famous writer in the world, the origin of his fame the price on his head, like a cruel fable of wishes granted." Now that his other wish—freedom—had been granted, Rushdie seemed ecstatic to be restored to the world with both his fame and his life intact.

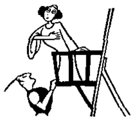
How had the fatwa changed Rushdie? "My writing's been changing, but that's because I'm ten years older," he said. "I didn't want to be a creature of the fatwa. I didn't want to write scared little books or revenge books." He never did—"The Moor's Last Sigh," his most recent novel, is as robust as anything he's written. But, like any writer, he seemed most excited about his current work, a loosely contrived version of the Orpheus myth which revolves around an Indian rock singer named Vina Aspara—she's "bigger than Elvis"—who gets enmeshed in a love triangle. "I wanted to write about the triangle of art, love, and death," Rushdie explained. "Can love, through the exercise of art, overcome death? And I wanted to write a book about the music I've been listening to all my life: rock and roll." He added, "The novel starts with an earthquake. As they say in Hollywood, 'Start with an earthquake and go from there.'"

As Rushdie left the Festhalle, he was easy, relaxed, and ready to embark on his new life. A week later, two fundamentalist organizations, ignoring the Iranian government's position, reasserted the authority of the Ayatollah's fatwa. One organization offered to add roughly a billion rials (three hundred thousand dollars) to the original, two-and-a-half-million-dollar bounty; the other offered a billion rials of its own. It was a heavy piece of news, and it became clear that the interlude at the book fair had been a privileged moment for Rushdie—when he thought he was free to live the kind of life that the rest of us take for granted—just before that moment was snatched away. It had been his first trip to Frankfurt. And now it is unlikely that he will be at liberty to attend next year.

—James Atlas

DEPT. OF INTRODUCTIONS

Dating tips from Shakespeare by way of the East Village.



Of all Shakespeare's plays, perhaps the one least likely to put a viewer in a lightheartedly amorous frame of mind is "Measure for Measure." You've got a Vienna filled with disease-ridden whores; a helpless fellow who's about to have his head chopped off for getting his girlfriend pregnant; a city ruler who's cracking down on sexual license while secretly scheming to ravish a would-be nun; the religious novice herself declaring that she'd rather be whipped bloody than deflowered; and a creepy duke who mooches around in a friar's outfit, gets his kicks out of marrying everyone off to profoundly flawed and unsuitable partners, and winds up thinking that maybe he can get the would-be nun to renounce her chastity for him. (As if!)

None of this connubial bleakness dissuaded the Target Margin Theatre company from holding its second annual singles night last month, when its production of the play opened at the Cornelia Connelly Theatre, in the East Village. "The irony had not escaped me," said David Herskovits, the play's director, a day or two after the event. "But remember that this is a play at the end of which relationships are forged in the difficult, complicated, fiery furnace of real life, rather than in romantic fantasy." The fiery furnace of real life on East Fourth Street on singles night provided attendees with the smoldering opportunity to sit between random members of the opposite sex during the performance and to attend a mixer afterward, at which post-show lit-crit might evolve into something less bookish. "What we hoped," Herskovits said, "is that the event would provide a good social beginning—that a thoughtful person would find it stimulating in ways that would be fruitful, that you could talk about over a drink afterward. But, look, it ain't 'Twelfth Night.'"

There was no obvious spontaneous combustion at the event—unlike the singles night during last fall's production of Preston Sturges's "Strictly Dishonorable," which was a great success. ("Last year, there were definitely some love connections," Carolyn Cantor, one of the event planners, said wistfully.) But the night was not without its chemistry. "Seeing a play gives you so much to talk about, and since 'Measure for Measure' is about sex and politics, you can apply it to what is going on now," said Lenore Pemberton, an actress and sign-language interpreter who swing dances in her spare time. "I was in a conversation—not the lingerie conversation, another one—about women feeling pressure in situations where politicians have power over their lives." Excuse me—the lingerie conversation? "Oh, gosh, I'm trying to remember how the subject came up. I think we were talking about power and politics and that went straight to the sexual revolution, and I guess that's how we started talking about revealing clothing, and went straight to lingerie. At the time, it seemed logical." Others had a less successful evening. "I saw an old boyfriend there, and I fled," Hilary Alger, a Target Margin board member, said.

The darkness of the sexual and marital politics in Shakespeare's play was, some viewers noted, appropriate to the New York dating scene: safe sex seems that much more appealing when you've spent the last two and a half hours hearing a litany of jokes about syphilis. And the dilemma of Isabella, the novice—*Does she give in to her would-be seducer to save the life of her brother, who has been sentenced to death for fornication? Does she dare to turn down the Duke's proposal in the play's ambiguous final moments?*—is a reminder that, even before Bridget Jones, the single girl's life was not always an easy one.

The swing-dancing Pemberton, who exchanged numbers at the event with a man she characterized as "pretty adorable," said that the play's pessimistic portrayal of human relations did not cast her into gloom. "It sort of makes you happy that you are not in that situation," she said. "It's like, phew, at least I don't have to face *that.*" —Rebecca Mead

Advertisement

On Silk

By Ntozake Shange

I COULD say: Imagine I am the ultimate conclusion of the allure of silk, the shimmer and breeze of silks. After all, my skin is silken, my grandmother's hands sheer as silk, my mother's cherry-blond hair hard to picture without the capricious play of light, changing her thick mane of a coif, moment to moment, from golden to cerise, ash blond to emboldened chestnut. These are but a few of the qualities of silk that are my blood, my blood memory, my dreams. Yet, without the extraordinary vision of Ferdinand and Isabelle, Cristobel Colon would not have been charged with the mission to find an alternate route to India, thence China, where silk was born. Columbus, the adventurer would not have set foot on Santo Domingo in search of the richesse of silks and gold, then synonymous in the Old World, never suspecting sugar, tobacco, rice, and cotton would be as gold to silk; that Africans, wrapped in a tight ivory cocoon of bondage we call slavery, would inhabit these 'Indies,' an indigo damask demographic, fertile, furtive, hybrid, glistening as silk does when the moon changes phases, as we do under a tropical sun. Silken and foreign to these shores and to the thought, these are the origins of genealogical essence, my blood trail in the New World, another Silk Road.

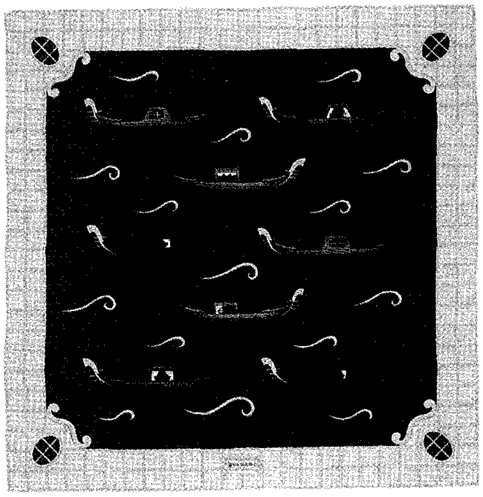
Though my earliest recollection of all that is silk, all that the swish soft fondling fabric conveys, is perfumed and gliding my eyebrows in the depth of my mother Ellie's closet. What shrouded my young head, braids and all, was the miracle of the night, of conga drums, claves, and castanets, formal dinners, chandeliers of translucent swirls of lights dancing above the heads of very important guests whose crèpe, velvet, chiffon, and silk I'd bask in under the dining table. So like an ocean of unexpected sensation were the skirt hems tickling my shoulders, sometimes I'd forget to gaze at the ankles in silk stockings that left ordinary brown and bronze calves the magic of rose quartz, moonstones, tourmaline sculpture, as secret as the next brush stroke of Sonia Delaunay or Raoul Dufy turning silk painting to a landscape abstractly worn by Parisian women adept at becoming art that could walk.

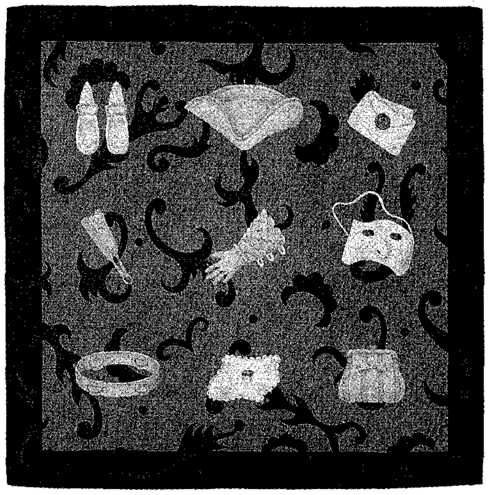
Advertisement

We in the New World far from Saint Germain des Prés or Tours, ignorant of the aroma and thick layers of medieval Venice, we drew La Habana to us, as if the satin-bodiced and feathered brocatelle of the mulatas at The Tropicana were more than our senses could bear, enough to sate our sense of beauty and illicit treasures. Were not the seeds of white mulberry trees upon which the silkworm dined contraband, smuggled, hidden dangerous cargo transported by the foolish or foolhardy headstrong bent on wealth and stature? But we needn't concern ourselves with distant and ancient menace. The flickering of home-style black and white movies after the flan, after the cigars and cognac, bringing lampas-skinned brown beauties swinging from trees, swinging their hips was intimidating enough. Surely, there was no one more beautiful than a woman in silk smiling down at me from a gargantuan Cuban cypress tree, but I hid at the foot of the stairs waiting for the exception.

As I understood with the mind of a child befuddled by the Cold War and immersed in films of WWII, my mother visited a fashion showroom not far from the Place de l'Opéra where an impish French model paraded in front of her as she sat, probably in chairs of chiné velvet with thickets of exotic plants, peacocks, and bizarre Oriental

Advertisement





leitmotifs. While she sat admiring the models, my father, Paul T., who was smooth as silk, decided upon a white silk taffeta strapless sheath embossed with pearls, and with a flying panel of the same materials that I now know to be a *robe à la française* so that my mother's figure was virginal, salacious, and regal at one and the same time. A velvet cape with the same pearled pattern was strewn over her left shoulder as she mysteriously moved down the winding staircase. I was speechless, not because I'd been found out, but because I was sure I was not to see my mother again in such a state of ethereal sensuality in my lifetime. I almost believed the glow on her face was a reflection of the moon flirting with her unabashed in front of my father. Though not named 'Silk' like so many others of us, my father interacted with the world as something precious to behold. This couple slipping into a black Missouri night to hear the raw silk voice of Tina Turner, the velvet *cisélé* intonations of Miss Gloria Lynne, or the heightened bouclé of Maria Callas were mine. I came from this phenomenon, as the writer Jean Toomer said "rare as a November cotton flower." *© Ntozake Shange, 1998*

Ntozake Shange is an award-winning playwright, poet, and novelist published by St. Martin's Press. Please join us when Shange reads from and signs copies of her favorite works on October 21, 1998 from 6 P.M. to 8 P.M. This is just one of a series of events of Beauty & Passion to be held at Café Bvlgari at 730 Fifth Avenue (57th Street), New York City. For a limited number of reservations, please call 800.BVLGARI, ext. 3.

Cover page: Venezia scarf collection in silk twill, $275.
Left: Invito al Ballo silk twill, $275.
This page (top to bottom): Commedia dell'Arte, Incontro Galeotto, and *Invito al Ballo* scarves. All from the Venezia Collection, $275 each.

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ANNALS OF GASTRONOMY

THE MILLENNIAL RESTAURANT

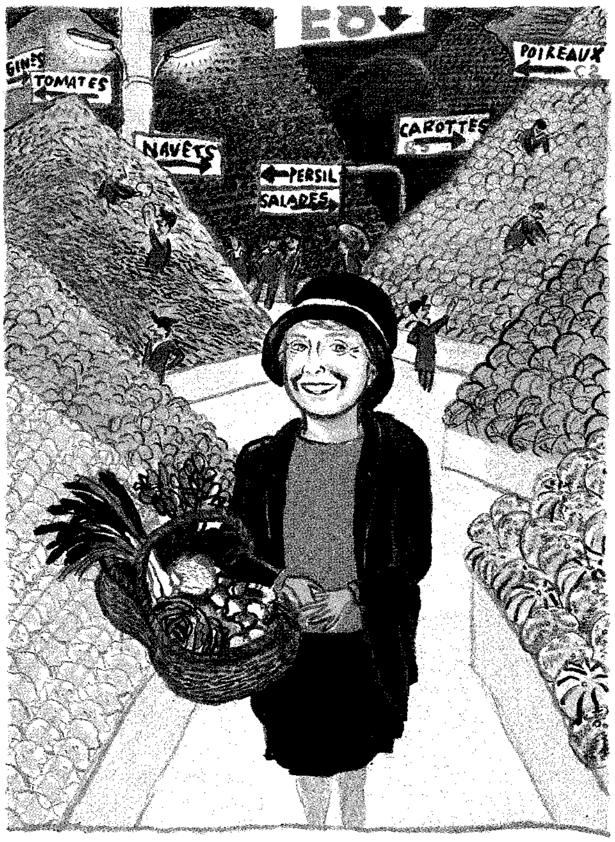
Alice Waters created the new American cuisine in Berkeley. The French are waiting to see what she'll do in Paris.

BY ADAM GOPNIK

NOT long ago, in the brown dawn light of the western Paris suburbs, three Americans could be seen taking a mildly illicit walk through the Rungis wholesale food market. The three Americans—the California chef Alice Waters, the vegetable scholar Antoine Jacobsohn, and me—all had something on their minds, and all were in a heightened emotional state that had its origins in something more than the very early hour and the very chilly weather.

Alice Waters was in a heightened emotional state because, as many of her friends believe, she is always in a heightened emotional state, particularly when she is in the presence of fresh produce. Alice, who was wearing a wool cloche, is a small, intense, pale, pretty, fiftyish woman, with a quiet, satisfied smile and a shining, virtuous light in her eye—the kind of American woman who a century ago would have been storming through saloons with a hatchet and is now steaming fresh green beans, but with similar motives. Her vision is rooted in the romantic Berkeley politics that she practiced before starting her restaurant, Chez Panisse, with a ten-thousand-dollar loan twenty-seven years ago. She believes in concentric circles of social responsibility, with the reformed carrot in the backyard garden insensibly improving the family around the dinner table, the reformed family around the dinner table insensibly improving the small neighborhood merchants they shop with, the reformed neighborhood merchants improving their city, and so right on, ever upward and outward, but with the reformed carrot always there, the unmoved (though crisply cooked) mover in the center.

Earlier this year, Alice was invited to open a restaurant at the Louvre, by Mme. Hélène David-Weill, the *très grande dame* who is the director of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs there. An enthusiastic article in the *Times* gave the impression that this was a fait accompli, or nearly so. In fact, in September it still existed essentially only as an enthusiasm in the eye of Alice Waters, Mme. David-Weill, and Richard Overstreet, an American painter who lives in Berkeley and Paris, and who has been the go-between since the beginning. (Francis Ford Coppola was the first person to suggest Alice to Mme. David-Weill.) Alice had come to Paris to move the project along, and Richard had brought her together with Antoine as a possible "principal forager," on the lines of a principal dancer, for it. Rungis was the setting for their long-awaited meeting.



The chef in the Parisian cornucopia: Waters believes it's possible—even imperative—to do good by eating well.

GERARD NICOLAS

Antoine Jacobsohn was in a heightened emotional state because he is in a heightened emotional state whenever he visits the Rungis market. Twenty-nine years ago, Rungis replaced the great Les Halles complex, which had dominated central Paris from the fifteenth century until after the Second World War, and which Zola called, in a novel he devoted to it, "The Belly of Paris." For Antoine, Les Halles was not just the belly of Paris but its heart, and for him the replacement of Les Halles by Rungis is the primordial sin of modern France—the destruction of Penn Station, Ebbets Field, and B. Altman's combined.

"When the market moved out of Les Halles," Antoine was saying, as he led our little party—it was illicit because, strictly speaking, you need a permit to shop at Rungis—"it effectively changed the relationship between pleasure and play and work in all of Paris. For centuries, because the market was at once a center for restaurants and for ordinary people, a whole culture grew up around it. Shopping and eating, the restaurant and the market, the stroller and the shopper, the artisan and the bourgeois—all were kept in an organic arrangement. And, because many of the goods couldn't be kept overnight, it meant that what was left at the end of every day was given to the poor. But for trivial reasons—traffic and hygiene—they made the decision to move the market to Rungis, and left a hole in the heart of Paris. There was no place allotted here for the small artisan, for the small grower, or for the organic market."

He shook his head in disbelief. Antoine was raised in North Plainfield, New Jersey, by a French mother; he has a research fellowship at the Museum of Vegetable Culture, in the Paris suburb of La Courneuve, a degree in agricultural sciences from Cornell, and a perfect, crisp, contrary French mind trapped in an American body and voice box. Antoine has been known to give his friends an idealized poster of the twenty-four cultivated radishes—some lost, some extant—of

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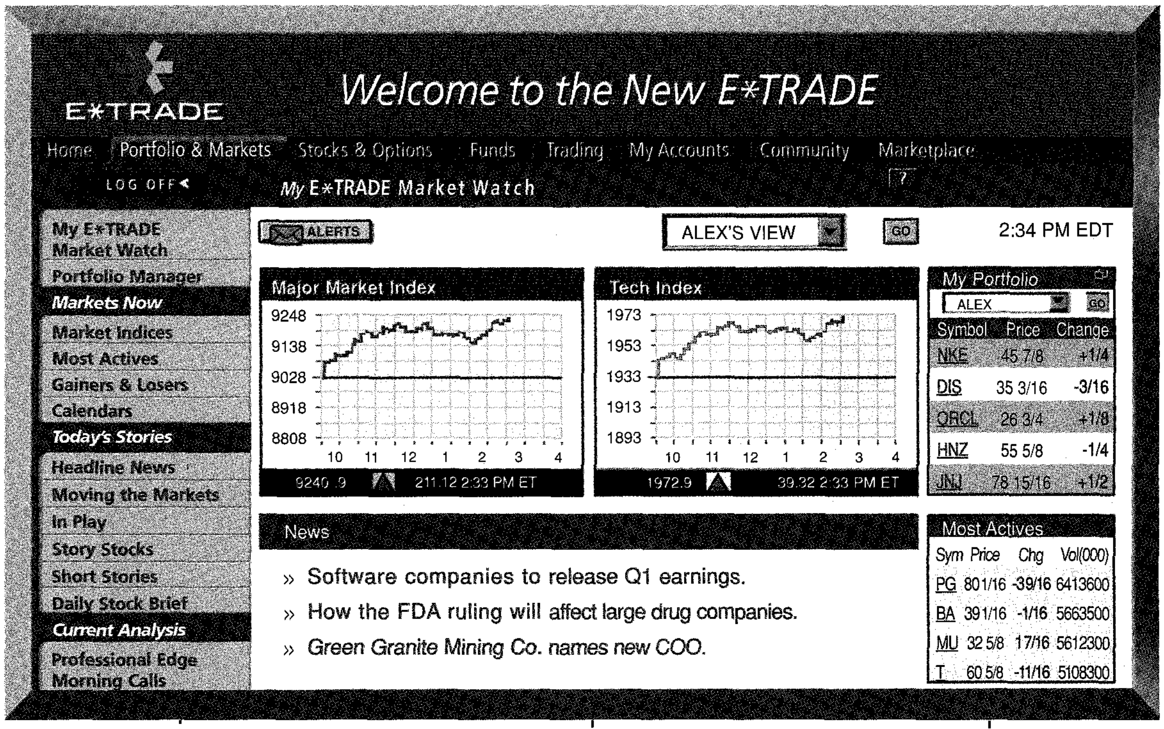
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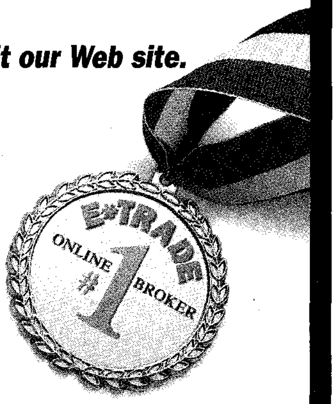
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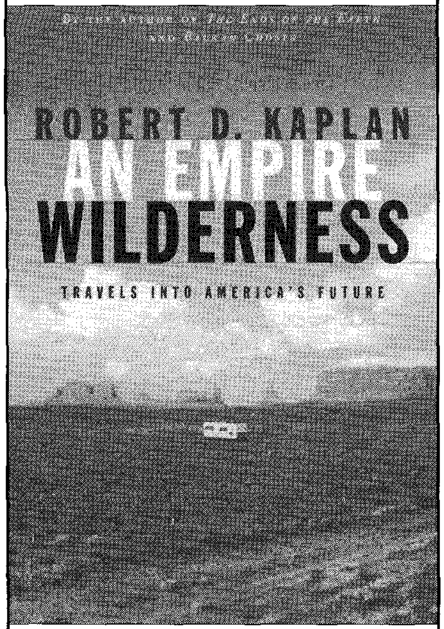
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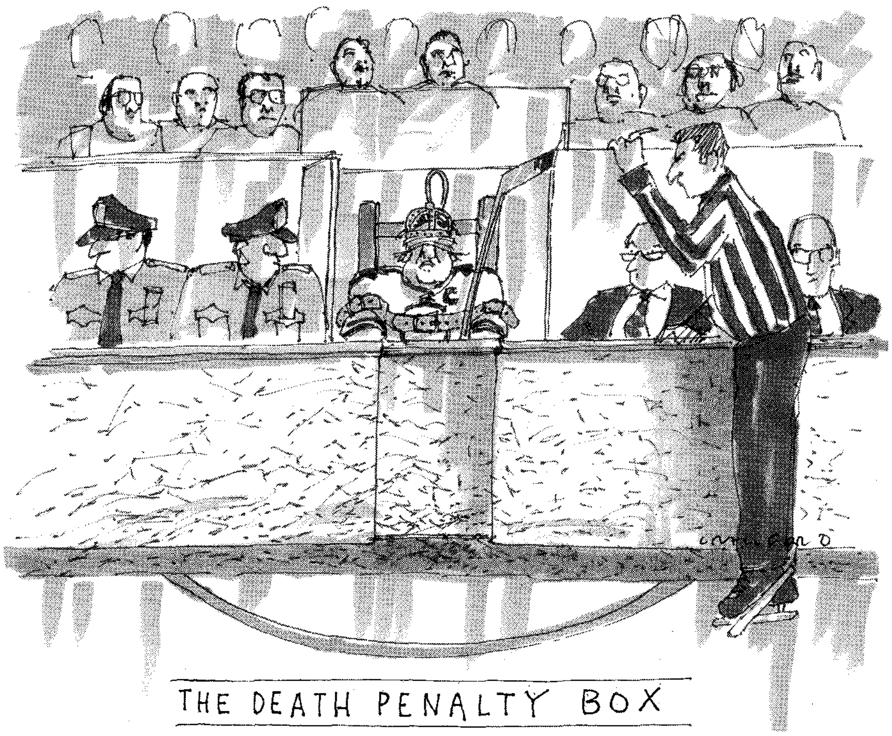

THE DEATH PENALTY BOX

the Île-de-France, and he has written beautifully, not to say longingly, of the lost monstrous spinach of Viroflay and the flat onions of Vertus.

We had been joined by Sally Clarke, of Clarke's restaurant, in London, who is one of Alice's many spiritual godchildren. The two chefs seemed torn between delight and surprise—delight in the freshness and green beauty of the vegetables, surprise at the lack of variety.

"I'm going to show you the space left for the local growers," Antoine went on. We walked through the aisles of the vast, chilly airplane hangars of vegetables: bins of *girolles*, crates of shiny eggplants. It all looked wonderful but remarkably standardized, which explained the standardization of what the average Paris greengrocer sells.

"Imagine," Antoine said. "So many radishes gone; the artichokes of Paris, almost gone; the turnips of Vaugirard, gone. There's a variety of beans that one reads about all the time in nineteenth-century texts. But gone! We've kept some seedlings of the plants in the museum, and they could be revived."

"We'll plant them in the Tuileries," Alice said softly, but with determination. One of her dreams for the restaurant is to raise a vegetable garden right outside the door.

Antoine walked along, greeting old friends and growers. "This man has excellent tomatoes," he now whispered to Alice.

"Does he grow organically?" she asked urgently. In recent years, Alice has become a fanatic of organic growing.

Antoine, who had been telling Alice how the French sense of *terroir*—of the taste and traditions of a local region—was more important to authentic produce in France than the precise rules of organic growing, asked the grower. The man shrugged, and then explained his situation. "He says he's giving up the business, in any case, as it happens, since it's becoming hopeless," Antoine said to Alice. (He failed to add that every French merchant, in every field, will always tell you that it's hopeless, he's going to give up the business; when French weapons salesmen go to China to sell missiles, they probably shrug when the Chinese start to bargain and say, Well, it doesn't matter, we're giving up the business anyway, it's a hopeless métier.)

Alice gave the grower a steady, encouraging look. "We just have to get the suppliers to adapt," she said. "That's what we did at Chez Panisse. You have to let them know there's the demand. You have to bring them along with you." In the early-morning light, you could sense Alice Waters' eyes radiating the spiritual intensity that for so long has startled and impressed her friends and admirers, and has set her apart from other chefs, mak-

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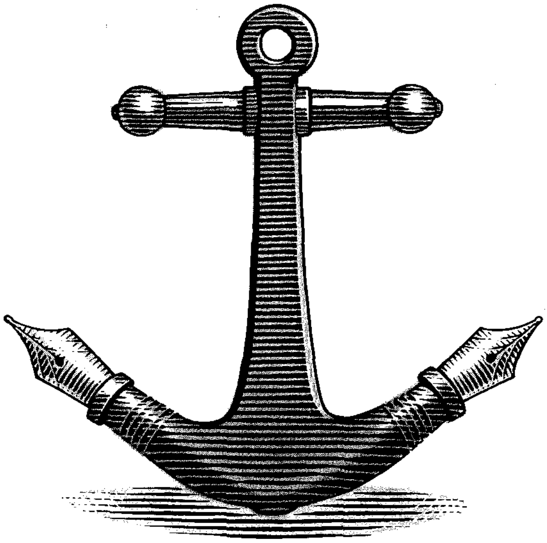

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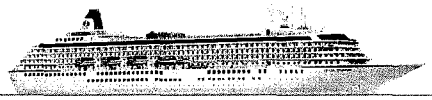

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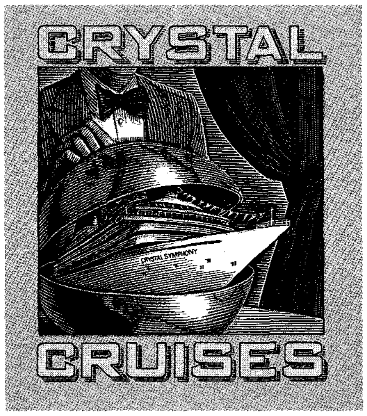

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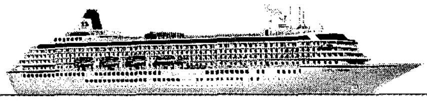

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ing her a kind of materfamilias to a generation of chefs ranging from Sally Clarke to Michel Courtalhac, in Paris. (He keeps a photograph of Alice in the window of his restaurant.) Aubert de Villaine, who is the co-director of the Domaine de la Romanée-Conti, the greatest wine estate in France, speaks of her in hushed tones, less as a superior hash-slinger than as a kind of cross between Emily Dickinson and La Pucelle. "There's something crystalline about her—an extraordinary purity of spirit," he said not long ago. "She's one of *les vigiles en haut*, the watchman in the crow's nest, seeing far ahead. The thing I most admire about Alice is the sense that the sensual is not really sensual if it is not, *au fond*, spiritual."

Antoine nodded at another merchant across the way. "Now, this man grows excellent asparagus," he whispered. "It's interesting. Two hundred, a hundred and fifty years ago, it was always green asparagus; now the demand is for white asparagus."

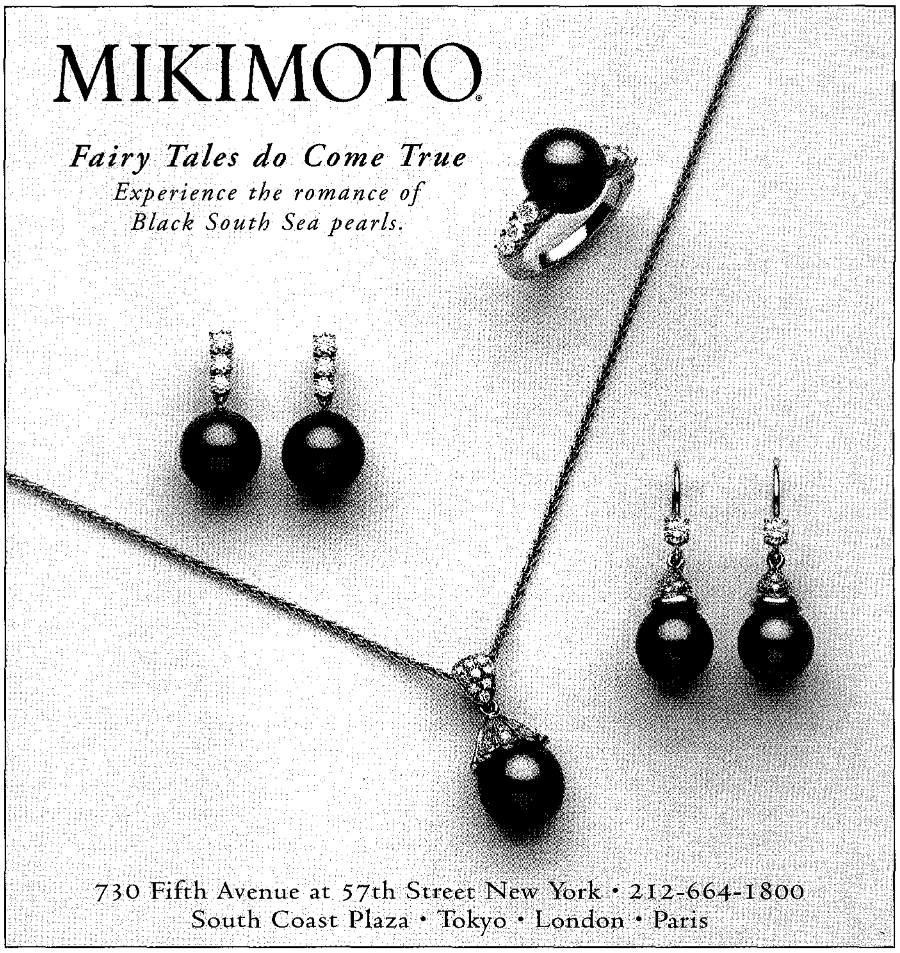
He went up to the grower and said, in French, "Why is it that no one any longer grows green asparagus—when was it that people went over to white asparagus?" The man gave him an incredulous look, and then said, in the beautiful clear French of the Île-de-France, "You know, I would say that what you've just stated is the exact contrary of the truth." It was a perfect Parisian tone of voice—not disputatious, just suggesting a love of the shared pursuit of the truth, which, unfortunately, happens not to be in your possession right now.

Antoine made the right response. He raised his eyebrows in polite wonder while smiling only on the left side of his face, an expression that means, How greatly I respect the vigor of your opinions, however much they may call to mind the ravings of a lunatic. "What do you mean?" he demanded.

"Well, it is my experience that everyone grows green asparagus now. It's all you see for decorative *plats*, that touch of green. In the magazines, for instance, among the fashionable chefs, it's all you see, green asparagus. It has a much greater decorative effect. It's obvious."

"Ah, yes, for decorative effect," Antoine agreed calmly. Everybody won.

As they were speaking, I was poking a pile of *girolles* nearby, and wondering if I had made a mistake in not planning to serve some kind of autumnal mushroom plate for dinner the next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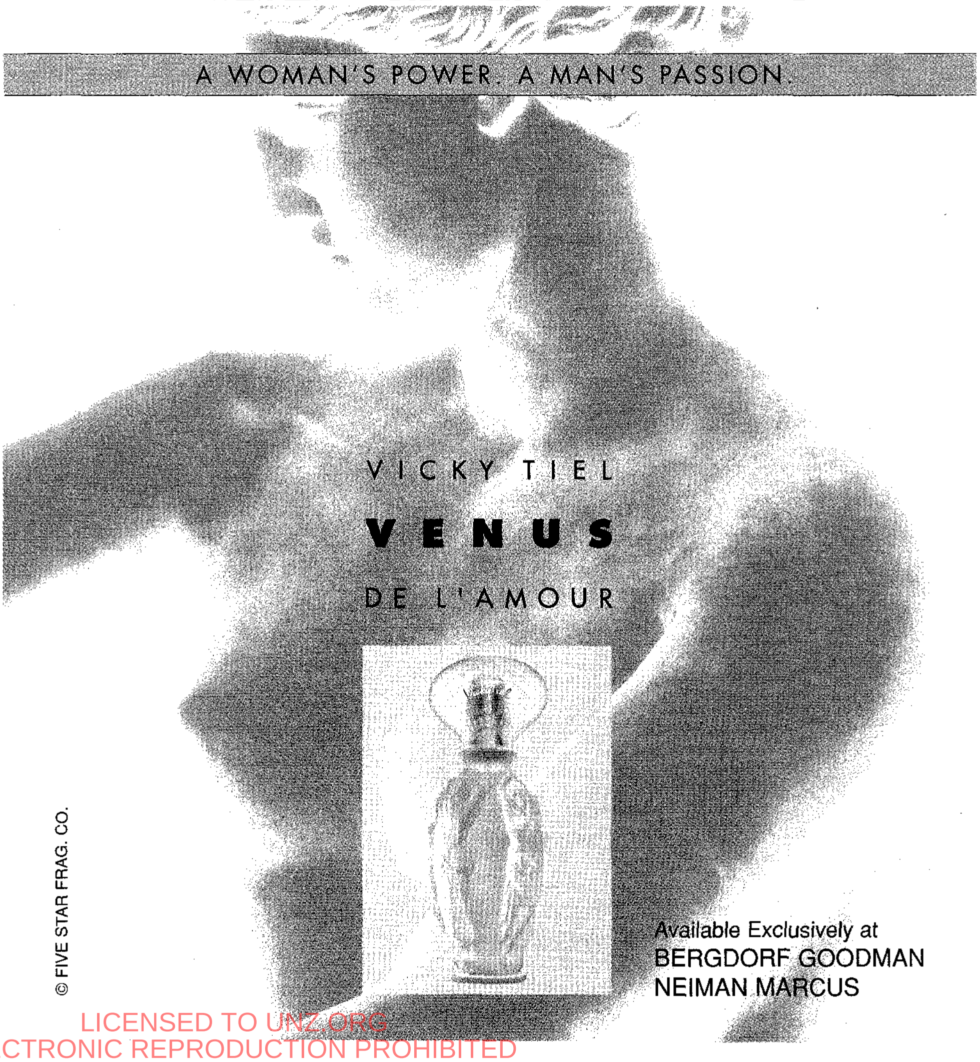
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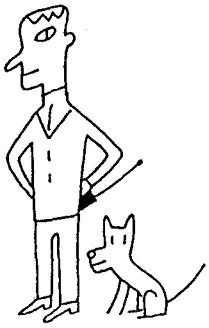
night. I was in a heightened emotional state because I had offered to cook dinner for Alice Waters, and I had spent most of the summer worrying about what I would cook and how it would taste. I had decided to try and sneak in a little serious shopping while I was observing Alice and Antoine. I had also decided to go out later that day and buy a new set of dinner plates. I had come to both of these decisions more or less in the spirit of a man who, having in an insane moment invited Michael Jordan over to play a little one-on-one, decides that he might as well use the occasion to put down a new coat of asphalt on the driveway.

I had made up my mind to do a lamb braised for seven hours—a *gigot de sept heures*, as it's known—which would be cooked in the Provençal style, with eggplant and tomatoes. But to be in Rungis at dawn with two such devoted *terroiristes* as Alice and Antoine, for whom cooking is meaningful only if it is an expression of the place where the things are being cooked, made me feel a little guilty. I was going to have to get the tomatoes out of a can, and though the canned tomato is absolutely typical of my own *terroir*, I somehow felt that they would disapprove.

Nearby, Alice had found frisée and watercress and was looking at them raptly—not with the greed of a hungry man seeing dinner but with the admiration of William Bennett looking at a long marriage. "There's nothing so beautiful as French watercress," she said. "I can recall walking down the Rue Mouffetard in 1965, my first year in Paris. I was a girl from New Jersey who'd grown up on frozen food, and to see the baskets and baskets of greens, so many shades of green and red!



"I walked up and down the street, my eyes unbelieving," she went on. "I had never tasted an oyster. I went through Normandy, eating eighteen at a time, and drinking apple cider, and it was so wonderful that I was just carried away, and I would fall asleep by the roadside. When I got back to Berkeley, I thought of opening a crêperie, and I tried to import some of the cider and found out that there was alcohol in it. That was why I kept passing out! I thought it was just the oysters and the apple juice

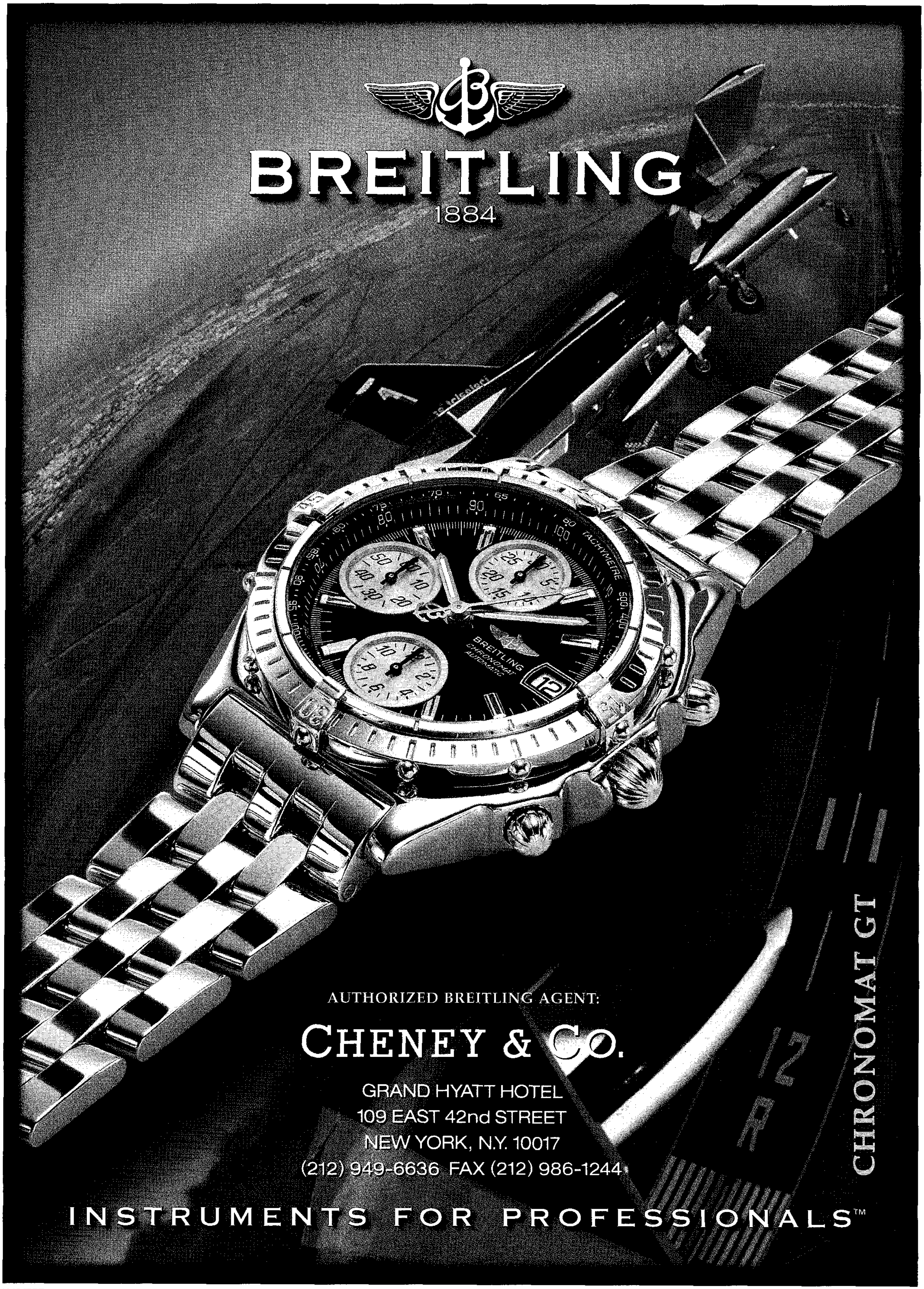
and France." She was lost for a moment.

"You know," Antoine said, coming over, "there used to be asparagus grown in Argenteuil, just down the river from Paris—great asparagus. And they used to have figs in Argenteuil, too. The white figs of Argenteuil, they were called in the nineteenth century. The trees were bent over with weights, so that the branches could be buried in the ground, to protect them all through the winter. Yet we think of figs as a southern fruit."

"Oh, we have to have them," Alice said, her eyes moist with emotion. "The white figs of Argenteuil! We'll grow them again. It can be done, you know." We had been wandering through the airplane hangars, and were standing among towers of carrots and leeks, mountains of haricots verts. She looked upward and, Pucelle-like, seemed to be seeing before her—in a vision, as though they were already tangible, edible—the white figs of Argenteuil: an improbable Berkeley Joan, imagining her France restored to glory.

I HAD been thinking about various menus ever since I'd had the idea of cooking dinner for Alice, and for a while I'd thought I might do a *four*-hour braised leg of lamb that I had found the recipe for in the Sunday magazine of the London *Independent*. Unfortunately, I had lost the issue of the magazine. I had the phone number of the editor, but I thought that it was unprofessional journalistic practice, in this day and age, to call up a fellow scandalmongering cynic and ask him if he would mind thumbing through his back issues for a recipe.

Then, this summer, I came upon a copy of a twenty-five-year-old recipe book written by the wonderful (and blind) food writer Roy Andries de Groot. The book was called "The Auberge of the Flowering Hearth." Half cookbook, half "Lost Horizon" remake, it tells about a little inn—the Auberge of the Flowering Hearth—which the author discovered in the French Alps, while he was on an assignment to write something on how the monks down there make Chartreuse. The menu called for mussel soup, poached pears, and a *gigot de mouton de sept heures*—the same slow-cooked lamb that I had lost the recipe for but, in this case, given the whole, classic nine yards, or seven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hours. Sounded great, and was in the right spirit for the occasion—part of the history of the American love of French cooking.

Then I had another inspiration. As Alice Waters would have wanted, my childhood had been a series of intense family dinners, evening after evening, with their own set of "social protocols," and one of the most cherished of these family dinnertime protocols was known as Getting Someone Else to Do the Work. I decided to call Susan Herrmann Loomis, who lives in Normandy, and ask her to come to Paris to help me cook. Susan is the author of books on French and American country cooking, and has a C.I.A.-worthy gift for going into deep cover in a strange region and coming out with its secrets. She cheerfully agreed to help, and after much discussion—she felt that the mussels would be too similar in color to the *gigot*, a feat of pre-visualization that increased my respect for the things a professional cook knows that an amateur doesn't—we decided that we would cook together. We scoured markets and arrived at a menu: steamed autumn vegetables with aioli, or garlic mayonnaise; the seven-hour lamb with eggplant and tomatoes; and an apple tart with rosemary. I went out and got the best bottle of Chartreuse I could find, to keep it honest to de Groot's memory.

WHILE we prepared, Alice continued her tour of Paris. The idea of a restaurant turned out to have been something of an afterthought at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, which is an annex of the Louvre, out on the Rue de Rivoli. For many years, it had been a sleepy, unattended institution, filled with old clocks and settees. Mme. David-Weill's reign devoted a recent exhibition to the Tati stores, a kind of French Woolworth's, and has promised in general to be much more swinging. Still, the space that had been put aside for eating, though it looked out from the back of the museum onto the Tuileries gardens, lacked some of the amenities of modern restaurants. "It's all those kinds of basic things," Alice explained after she had seen it. "Where do the employees wash their hands? Where are the umbrellas for the rainy days? It's only ninety covers, which is even fewer than Chez Panisse." She went on, diplomatically, "It's really more of a tearoom size than anything else. I worry that the space is too small to express what we'd like to express." In a kind of mission statement, she has described the restaurant as she imagines it:

> A platform, an exhibit, a classroom, a conservatory, a laboratory, and a garden. It must be, in a phrase, an art installation in the form of a restaurant, expressing the sensuousness of food and putting people in touch with the pleasures of eating and with the connection between those pleasures and sustainable agriculture. . . . All the elements of the collaboration, from the menu to the décor, will clearly demonstrate where the food comes from and how it was grown. The emphasis is going to be on the food, the kind that makes eating a soul-nourishing experience. Amidst the grandeur of the Louvre, the restaurant must feel human, reflecting the spirit of the farm, the *terroir*, and the market, and it must express the humanity of the artisans, cooks, and servers who work there.

Yet Alice seemed unperturbed by the difficulties; she has the sublime California confidence that all physical problems are susceptible to a little intense spiritual pressure. "I'm not worried," she said. "If we can solve the space problem, everything else will fall into place. I don't really want it to be an extension of Chez Panisse in Paris. There will be a vegetable garden, but more important will be establishing a relation to a whole network of suppliers. I'm going to work with Eiko Ishioka, the great Japanese designer, who will do an inspired job. And now I've found my forager, in Antoine. This restaurant could be the next step, it could be a statement about diversity on so many levels. It could be the next part of an effort to keep people from perceiving life in the unified way that the mass culture demands." (When she's asked if her daughter, Fanny, has ever gone to a McDonald's, she answers, carefully, "She may have. During a soccer match or something. But I've told her that while she's free to do it if she wants to, I would rather not get involved in that kind of activity.")

Alice is acutely aware that there are people who see something hypocritical or unreal about a woman who presides over an expensive restaurant preaching against commercial culture. This is silly, of course—if there's going to be a faith, somebody's got to live in the Vatican—but it is also false on its own terms. She has scrupulously kept Chez Panisse out of mass merchandising of any kind. There are no Chez Panisse frozen foods, no Chez Panisse canned sauces, no Chez Panisse pasta. There are only cookbooks and a line of granola. Alice Waters is in every way the anti-Wolfgang Puck. (People who know insist that the restaurant still makes remarkably little money for such a famous place.) In a speech she made recently to teachers involved with

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You can't help it, Miss,
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the "garden in every school" project, in California, she pointed out that "all too many kids—both rich and poor—are disconnected from civilized and humane ways of living their lives," and then added the Berkeley Basic Truth: "The sensual pleasure of eating beautiful food from the garden brings with it the moral satisfaction of doing the right thing for the planet and for yourself."

MOST people feel that Alice is the figure par excellence of the great Berkeley Transformation, in which the wise children ate the revolution before it had a chance to eat them. Kermit Lynch, the wine importer, who has done more than anyone else to bring the organic revolution to French winemaking (and has been called a "hopeless romantic" for his efforts), is a product of the same history. "Alice and I both started our businesses around the same time," he recollected recently. "She started cooking for an underground newspaper in San Francisco, and I was working for the Berkeley *Barb*—and there we were. Who could have imagined that we'd end up this way? It was very political what she was doing then, and it still is." Alice herself traces the crucial moment for the creation of Chez Panisse to the defeat of Robert Scheer, now a well-known journalist in Los Angeles, whose congressional campaign she had worked for in 1966. "I was so crushed, and I thought, I'm just going to start my own world," she says.

It may be this reconciliation of utopian politics and aristocratic cooking, more than anything else, that has divided the cooking cultures of France and America. The *soixante-huitards* were as disappointed in France as they were in America, but they drove their political disappointment into more political disappointment. The culture that the French radicals were countering, after all, was already epicurean—there was no cultural space to be found in expanding it. The counterculture in America had just the opposite situation—it was Nixon who ate cottage cheese with ketchup—and, anyway, the counterculture in America liked pleasure; its anthem was "Feed Your Head," not "Clear Your Head."

Over time, an obsession with sex and drugs slid imperceptibly into an obsession with children and food. This obsessiveness is what separates Alice Waters

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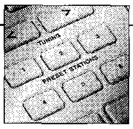

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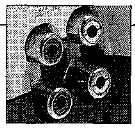

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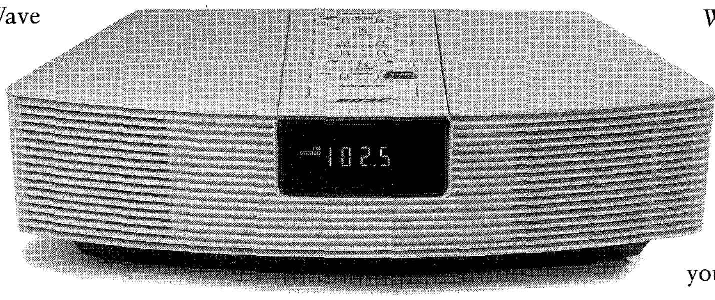

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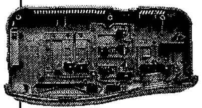

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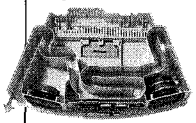

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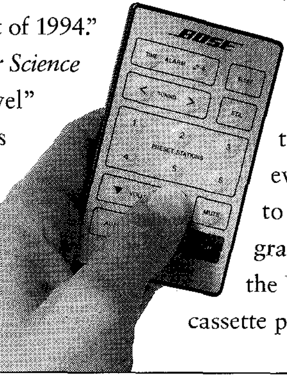

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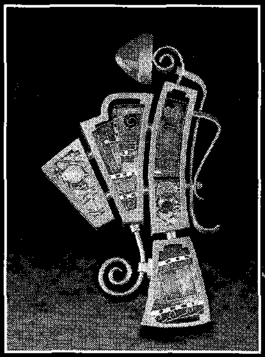

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from all the other "Anglo-Saxon" restaurateurs who have arrived in Paris recently to open restaurants. (Sir Terence Conran, the London food lord, has just remade an old cabaret on the Rue Mazarine, for instance, bringing the new English style to Paris.) For Alice, the idea of making the millennial restaurant in France is a way of closing a romantic circle. Like de Groot, she sees France as the cradle of organic culture in every sense: "The restaurant I imagine is a way of repaying that debt to France, of Americans taking the best of ourselves, instead of the worst of ourselves, to help recall the French to their own best traditions, a way that my generation can repay the debt we owe to France."

ON the day of our dinner, Kenneth Starr's report had just appeared, and all afternoon friends from New York were calling me about it. Susan Loomis and I ran back and forth from the study to the kitchen, doing a lot of "Can you believe what he's saying?" (and also a fair amount of "Can you believe what they were doing?"). I was trying to adjust the heat on the lamb when the phone rang, from my little boy's school. Once again, as he often had since the term began, he had refused to take a nap, and the school wanted me to bring him home. I sighed, forgot about the report, checked the lamb, left Susan in the kitchen, and raced off with my wife to pick him up. (I thought ruefully that you could bet a million dollars that, if he were in a school in New York, there would be a Nap-Averse Support Group, a special room for the dormitively challenged, and a precedent-setting lawsuit launched by the attorney father of an earlier child, guaranteeing the right of every child to refuse a nap. But this was Paris: strictly no nap, no school.) I hesitated about leaving the lamb in the oven untended, but then decided, well, seven hours. . . . Throughout the afternoon, instead of feeling, as I had hoped, like Roy de Groot luxuriating in the Alps, I felt a lot like Ray Liotta spinning in the last reel of "Goodfellas," when he's cooking veal for his crippled brother, and the police helicopter is circling overhead, and he and the mule who's carrying the cocaine have to go and get her lucky hat.

How was the lamb? The evening

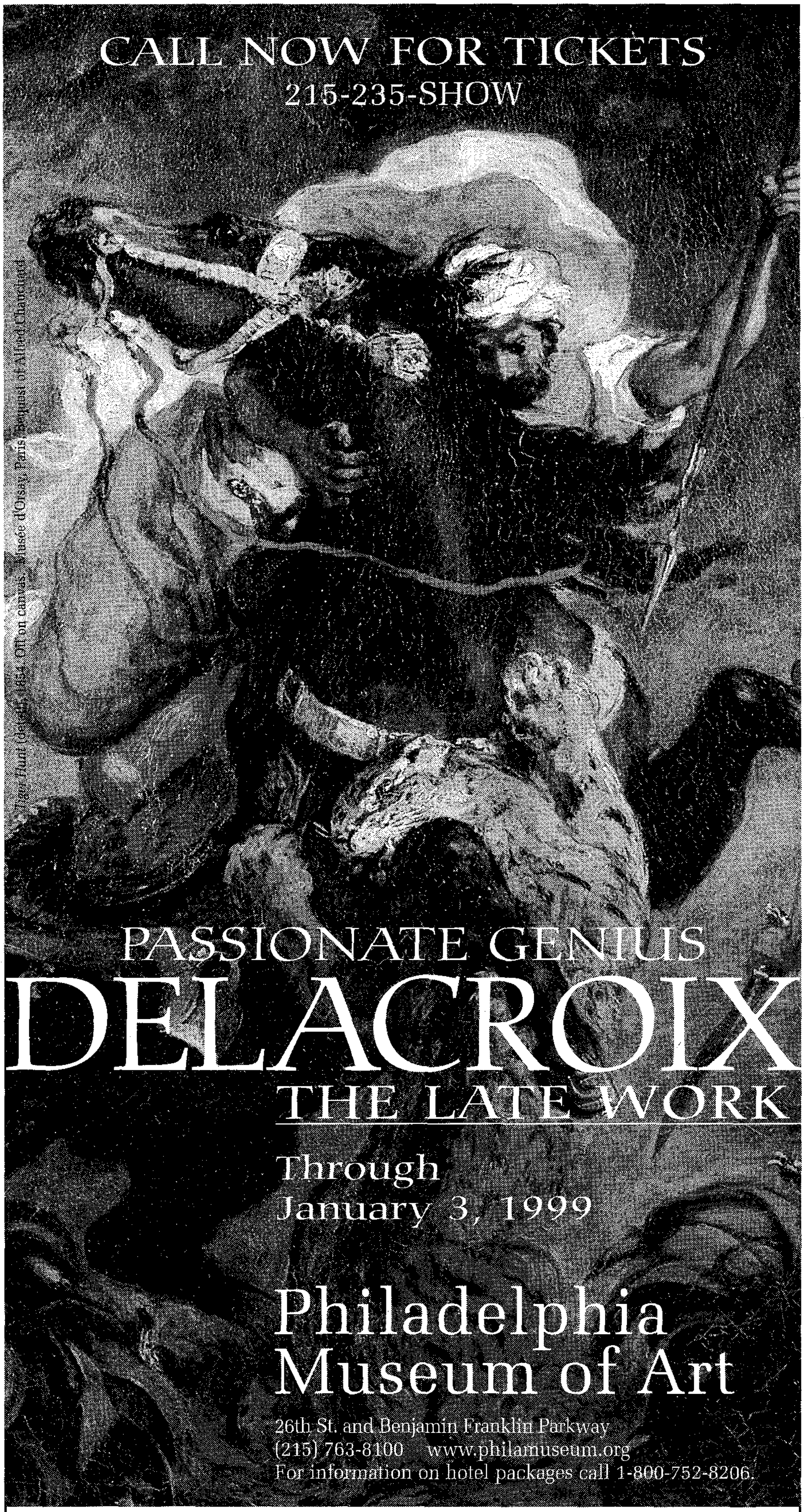
went well, though all through dinner the Starr report was being faxed to us by a friend: pages—four hundred of them—kept churning out of the machine, just a room away. You couldn't help hearing them as they arrived, and every now and then I would go in and peek at the latest revelation. There was an odd symmetry: on the one hand, at our dinner table the high priestess of the American generation that has come to believe that only through refined sensual pleasure can you re-create an ideal America; on the other, page after page of legal detail documenting the existence of those who believe that talking about ideals while pursuing sensations is just what makes this generation such a bunch of louses. It was a kind of two-course meal of radical hedonism and extreme puritanism, both as American as, well, apple pie.

But how was the lamb? Alice spoke freely about the problems that the space at the Louvre represented. Listening between the sentences, you could deduce that, if she had not lost heart, she had, at least, a larger sense of how vast and difficult a project it promised to be. Susan Loomis's aioli was fabulous. People talked, as they do everywhere, about Clinton and Monica.

But how was the lamb? The wine was excellent. The tarte aux pommes was fine.

And the lamb? Well. The lamb had a strong resemblance to a third baseman's mitt—if I had Antoine Jacobsohn's gift for precision, I would compare it to Buddy Bell's glove, circa 1978—with interesting hints of Naugahyde, kapok, and old suède bomber jacket. There were plenty of white beans, though, and some sauce, so everyone pushed it around politely on the plate. I think I know now what went wrong: after three years of a French oven, I realized that it was easy to forget that American cookbooks were still written, so to speak, in Fahrenheit. De Groot's two hundred degrees was almost half as hot as the two hundred degrees of my Celsius oven.

I also saw that Alice Waters didn't notice. If you are playing tennis with Martina Hingis, she does not notice when your backhand is off, because she does not notice when your backhand is on. What you have is not what she would call a backhand. At least I was able to explain to the company that the lamb



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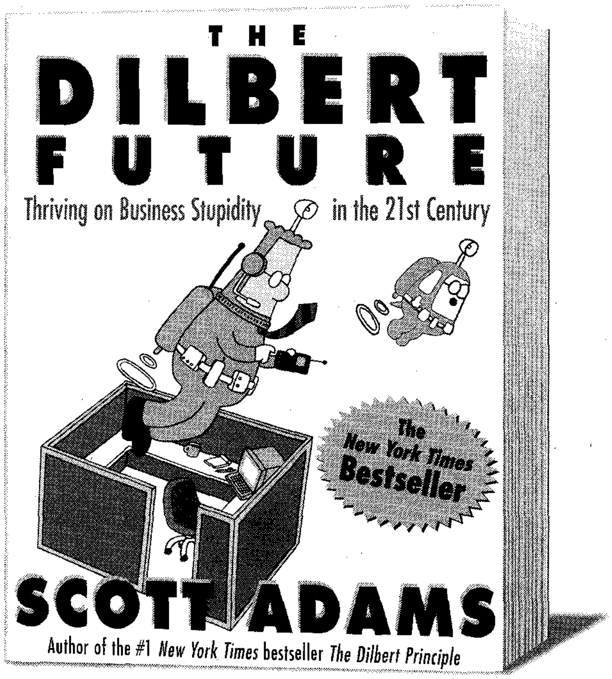

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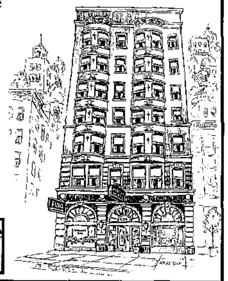

came from Roy de Groot's book, and talked about what a haunting image it gave of a now vanished French cooking culture: the iron pots on the hearth, the shy Provençale lady in the kitchen, the daily bounty from the farms and the hunters. Alice got that look in her eye. "I love that book," she said. "And I went on an expedition to the Alps just to find the auberge."

Did that perfect auberge really exist? I asked.

"Well, no, not really. Not exactly," she said, in a tone that sounded like "not at all." "I mean, yes, it didn't, not like that." She thought for a moment. "Of course, it existed for him. It still exists for us, in the minds of the people around this table. Maybe that's where the ideal restaurant always will be."

POSTSCRIPT: After Alice Waters left Paris, *Le Figaro* published an interview with her in which she gently reviewed her concerns about the Rungis market. "THE MARKETS IN PARIS ARE SHOCKING!" was the headline on the piece, whose effect, from a P.R. point of view, was that of a Japanese baseball manager who after a trip to Yankee Stadium is quoted in a headline saying, "YOU CALL THAT A BALLPARK?" Alice Waters is learning that the real France is an inscrutable, hypersensitive place.

I have come to suspect that what is called a seven-hour lamb was really meant to be seven-hour mutton. I am aware, of course, that there may be other, better recipes for this dish, and other, more careful cooks who have prepared it. (The four-hour lamb was great.) But it is also my suspicion that, like so many vanishing things in French cooking, the seven-hour recipe was actually made for harder sheep in tougher times. In the late-modern world, where we get all the pleasure we can as soon as we can get it and on any terms we can, and none of us want to take a nap, for fear of missing some pleasure we might otherwise have had—in a world like that, as I say, there may just be no place left for the seven-hour *gigot*. ♦

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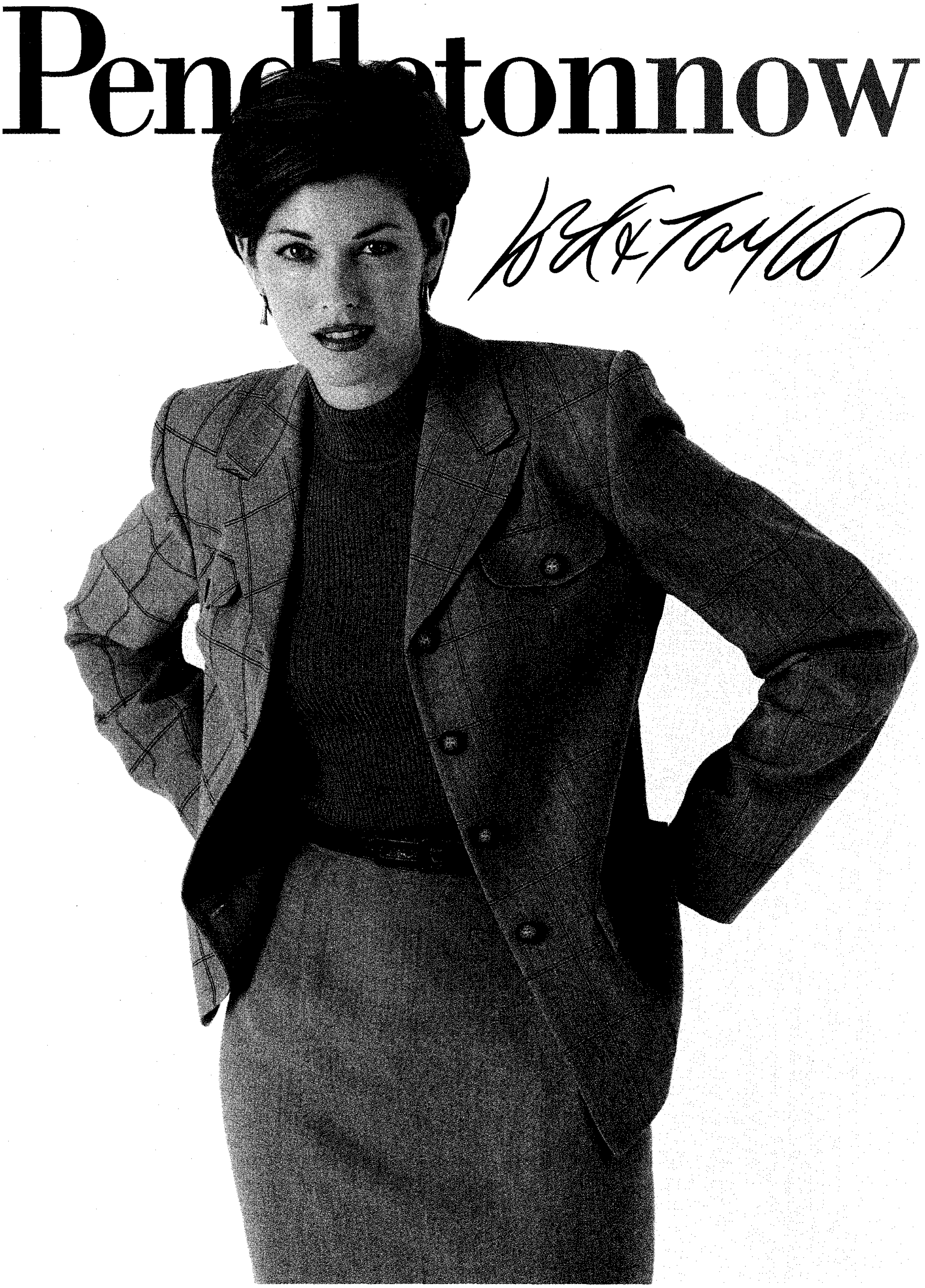

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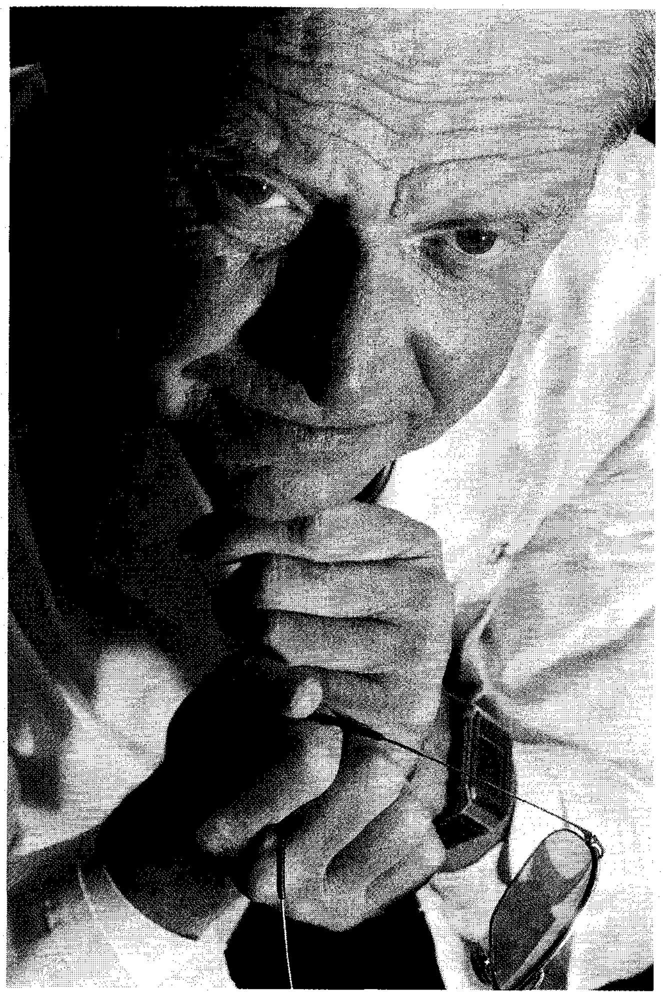
ANNALS OF MEDICINE

DR. FAIR'S TUMOR

A specialist believes that the future of cancer therapy lies in tailoring treatments to individual tumors. He's starting with his own.

BY JEROME GROOPMAN

"MY colon cancer is considered incurable, so I set out on my own," Dr. William R. Fair told me when I met him not long ago in his office, on the Upper East Side. He had just finished seeing patients, had taken off his white coat, and was sitting in a high-backed leather swivel chair. His polished oak desk was cluttered with papers; the bookshelves on the walls were crammed with medical journals. Even so, he had the slightly willed serenity of a C.E.O. who has taken up gardening in retirement. He's sixty-three and, with light-blond hair, a ruddy complexion, and clear blue eyes, looked good for his age. He smiled a lot when he talked about his illness, as if to put his visitor at ease. But from the measured, polite comments of his colleagues, you can infer the type of person he used to be: hard-charging, tightly wound, masterful, impatient. In short, he'd had all the personality traits of the topflight surgeon he was: someone who would rather do something, anything, than nothing at all.



Dr. William Fair was "emotionally shattered" when the cancer swiftly recurred and his odds for survival plummeted.

MAGGIE STEBER

These days, he's trying to save his own life by pushing past the usual methods of cancer treatment. Most cancer therapies are arrived at through a one-size-fits-all approach: candidate drugs are first screened in the test tube against prototype tumors, and then given to groups of incurable patients in hit-or-miss clinical trials. Dr. Fair, having joined the ranks of the "incurable," has become convinced that his best chance for an effective treatment is to study his own cancer cells in his own laboratory, and develop therapies that are specific to his own cancer—made-to-measure medicine. And so far the results have been altogether encouraging.

For thirteen years, from 1984 until 1997, William Fair was the chairman of urology at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, one of the premier cancer hospitals in the world. He was an eminent surgeon, who specialized in tumors of the prostate, bladder, testis, and kidney. He would perform as many as five operations a day, direct research projects on surgical oncology, and attend to all the administrative hassles—making personnel decisions, adjudicating turf wars, negotiating salaries—that arose in his department.

"I had the typical surgeon's Superman complex, and ignored the initial symptoms," he says, recounting the history of his illness. For the greater part of 1994, he suffered from fatigue, heart palpitations, light-headedness. Despite his exhaustion, he kept up his intense schedule of surgery, research, and administration. "He's one of those go-go guys who work twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week," says Dr. Skip Heston, who has collaborated with Fair for twenty-five years as the principal laboratory scientist in the urology department. "That year, I didn't like the way Bill looked."

Neither did Fair's wife, a former Army nurse, and, without consulting him, she made an appointment for him to see an internist. When he found out, he cancelled: he just didn't have the time. Finally, she and Heston prevailed on him to get a checkup. He turned out to have severe anemia—the result of a tumor in his colon which was leaking blood.

"When you come down with cancer," Dr. Fair says, "there are two ways to go—either clam up or be totally open." He informed the staff at Memorial Sloan-Kettering of his condition, and they immediately rallied to his aid. He would receive the best of care at his own hospital. Even so, the surgeon's authority is not easily relinquished. In January, 1995, he was being wheeled toward the operating room when he recognized a patient on another gurney as the man he had previously been scheduled to operate on that morning. Propping himself up on an elbow, Fair assured the patient that he had taken care of everything—that he had arranged for an excellent replacement and had everything under control.

His own operation, conducted by the chief of colorectal surgery there, had two objectives: to remove the tumor and

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surgically explore the affected area. If the cancer proved to be limited to the bowel, and not to have spread into adjacent lymph nodes or other areas of the abdomen, the operation would probably be curative. Unfortunately, two lymph nodes adjacent to the tumor turned out to have metastatic deposits of cancer.

William Fair was shaken by the news. The chance that he would be alive in five years was about forty per cent. When cancer is found in a lymph node, he knew, there are usually other deposits of cancer around, too small for even the best surgeon to identify and remove. Dr. Fair was also aware that colon cancer is particularly resistant to both radiation and chemotherapy. At this point, Dr. David Kelsen, an oncologist at the hospital who specialized in bowel cancers, recommended something called adjuvant chemotherapy. In this treatment, the toxic drugs are given with the idea that they are more effective when the tumor mass has been removed and the remaining cancer is present in small, residual amounts. But adjuvant chemotherapy would at best raise Dr. Fair's chances of survival to fifty-fifty.

For three months, drugs were instilled directly into William Fair's abdomen; he then received another twelve months of intravenous treatment. Even during the treatment, Dr. Fair continued to practice. "I'd do a three- or four-hour surgery, finish, run up and get chemotherapy, and then return for another operation," he says. His son, William III, who runs a health-care company, recalls a sixtieth-birthday trip to the Galápagos that Dr. Fair insisted on taking two weeks after completing chemotherapy in 1996: "He was weak and took along I.V. fluids and medications to bolster himself. But even there he moved ahead of the guide, jumped into a sea kayak, and off he went, solo."

Dr. Fair told himself that his life would return to the pattern it had followed for some three decades. And for a year after his treatment this appeared to be true, almost as if he had willed it to be. Then, in January of 1997, a routine follow-up CAT scan showed the cancer growing as a mass in a lymph node near his liver.

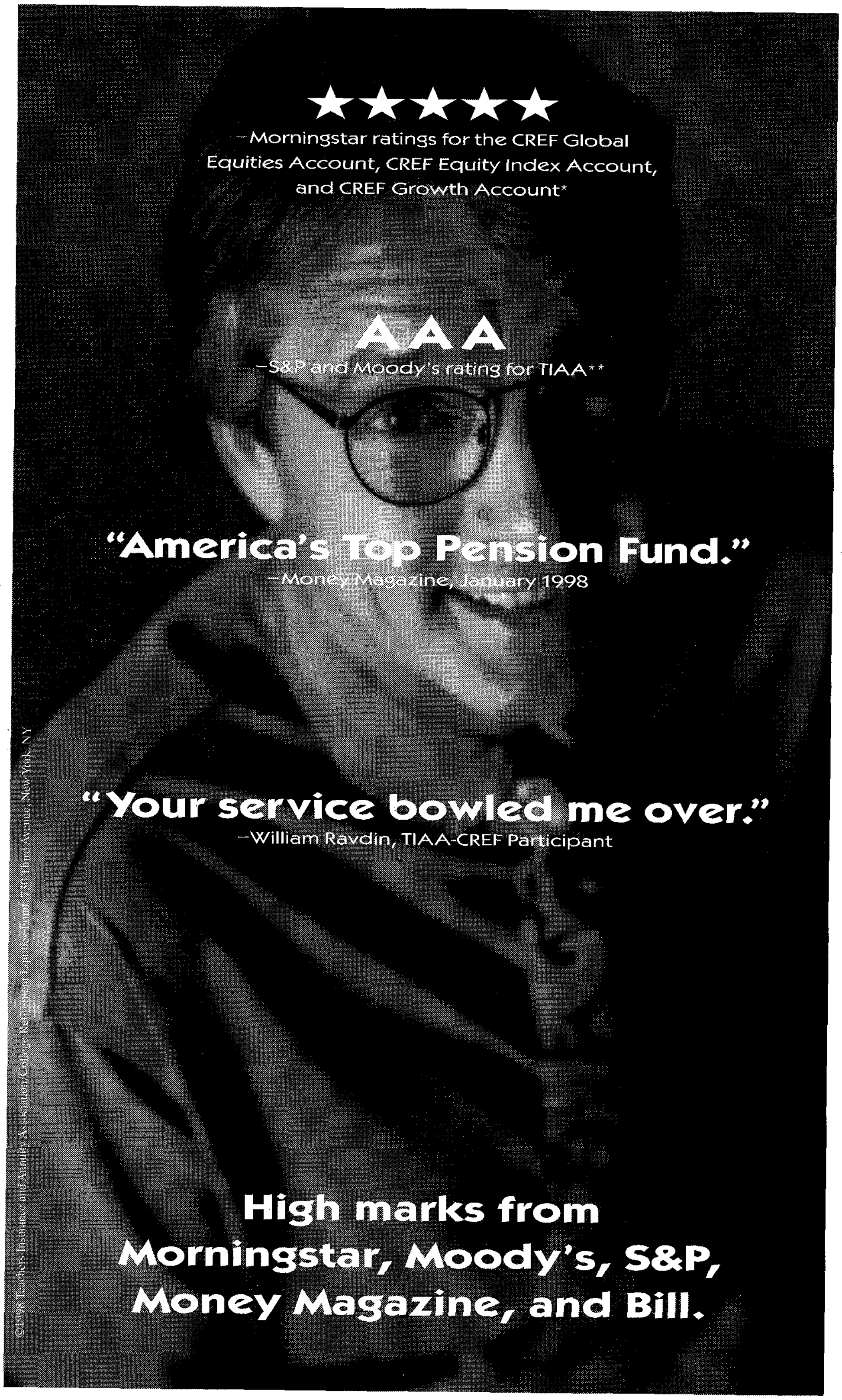
Dr. Fair recalls being "emotionally shattered." The chances that he would be alive in five years had plummeted to about one in ten. And none of the treatment possibilities were especially promising. Since chemotherapy and radiation were toxic and not very effective, and there were no convincing data that such treatment would extend his life, he chose palliative surgery. The tumor mass would be snipped out, in the hope not of eradicating it but of slowing its progression.

It wasn't Dr. Fair's style to hang back. His family members well remember the time when, on safari in Tanzania, they were in a car crash. Despite several broken ribs and a broken wrist, he attended to a serious leg wound that his wife had incurred, stanching the bleeding and sewing up the wound using a Swiss Army knife and some suture material he'd brought along. But in the consulting rooms at Memorial Sloan-Kettering, Dr. Fair was being told that the standard arsenal of medical intervention had been exhausted. There was, the best medical wisdom had it, little to do but wait.

That's when Dr. Skip Heston decided to get a piece of Fair's tumor for his lab. "The idea was to create an entirely new treatment," says Heston, a tall, husky, brown-haired man. "And everyone's tumor is individual. So we needed to get our hands on Bill's." Heston waited outside the operating room and secured a piece of the cancer as it was being excised from near the base of the liver. Then came the difficult part.

First, the mass of cancer was meticulously transported in a closed, sterile container to the fourth floor of the adjoining Rockefeller Research Building. If the specimen should be contaminated by any free-floating bacteria, the cancer cells could die. Cancers that seem invincible in the body are delicate, hothouse flowers in the laboratory: they must be carefully nourished, protected, cosseted. So the researchers worked within a special sterile chamber called a laminar-flow hood. The mass was dispersed, and the cells were placed in petri dishes containing a plasma-like fluid that had the nutrients and hormones necessary for cell growth. Then the petri dishes were moved into an incubator, where they could be kept at body temperature and exposed to a humidified mixture of oxygen, nitrogen, and carbon dioxide identical to that within the human bloodstream. And soon the cancer cells began to grow. The first major hurdle had been overcome. There was now a ready supply of cells to characterize and investigate. Heston

"It's a children's book, with lots and lots of interesting recipes."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*Source: Morningstar, Inc., August 31, 1998. Morningstar is an independent service that rates mutual funds and variable annuities. The top 10% of funds in an investment category receive five stars and the next 22.5% receive four stars. Morningstar proprietary ratings reflect historical risk-adjusted performance, and are subject to change every month. They are calculated from the account's three-, five-, and ten-year average annual returns in excess of 90-day Treasury bill returns with appropriate fee adjustments, and a risk factor that reflects performance below 90-day T-bill returns. The overall star ratings referred to above are Morningstar's published ratings, which are weighted averages of its three-, five-, and ten-year ratings for periods ending August 31, 1998. The separate (unpublished) ratings for each of the periods are:

Period	**CREF Stock Account** Star Rating/Number of Domestic Equity Accounts Rated	**CREF Bond Market Account** Star Rating/Number of Fixed Income Accounts Rated	**CREF Social Choice Account** Star Rating/Number of Domestic Equity Accounts Rated	**CREF Global Equities Account** Star Rating/Number of International Equity Accounts Rated	**CREF Equity Index Account** Star Rating/Number of Domestic Equity Accounts Rated	**CREF Growth Account** Star Rating/Number of Domestic Equity Accounts Rated
3-Year	4/2,188	5/728	4/2,188	5/464	5/2,188	5/2,188
5-Year	4/1,381	4/493	4/1,381	4/237	N/A	N/A
10-Year	4/693	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

**These top ratings are based on TIAA's exceptional financial strength, claims-paying ability and overall operating performance. CREF certificates are distributed by TIAA-CREF Individual and Institutional Services. For more complete information, including charges and expenses, please read the CREF Prospectuses offered above before you invest or send money.

and his colleagues were about to embark on a private war against Dr. Fair's tumor.

CANCER does not exist. Cancers do. That is, the word "cancer" doesn't name one disease, or one type of cell, but hundreds of them. Even within categories of cancer, such as cancer of the breast or the lung or the colon, each person's tumor is unique. Every tumor has a particular repertoire of deranged genes acting in the particular milieu of that individual. And it is this repertoire of aberrant genes which dictates the behavior of the cancer: whether it grows slowly, as a solitary mass, or spreads explosively; whether it dies back when exposed to radiation and chemotherapy or proves stubbornly resistant to them.

But though cancers are various and individual, the available anticancer therapies tend to be standardized and seldom address the unique characteristics of a patient's particular tumor. For the most part, these therapies work like carpet bombing: the target is sometimes hit, but often it is not, because cancer cells tend to be well armored against attack, and, in any case, the therapies do considerable collateral damage to normal tissue. What Dr. Fair needed was a sort of therapeutic smart bomb, and that required, first of all, learning more about the nature of the target. Heston, in his fourth-floor lab, harvested a portion of Dr. Fair's cancer cells from the incubator cultures and analyzed the cells for altered genes. A specific derangement of a gene called p53 was found. The p53 gene normally restrains cell division; when it's mutated, cells can grow wildly, which is to say cancerously.

For the same reason that the behavior of wildlife in captivity may tell you more about captivity than about wildlife, it's hard to test anticancer drugs in a petri dish. To get a better sense of a cancer's real vulnerabilities, you need to have the cells grow as a tumor in an animal. So Heston injected some of the cancer cells into the flanks of special, immune-deficient mice, which allow foreign, human-cancer cells to grow within them. (Normal, immune-competent mice reject human cells.) By last summer, a second milestone had been passed. Now that Heston and his colleagues had a population of lab animals afflicted with Dr. Fair's tumor, they could test new kinds of treatment on them.

WILLIAM FAIR had finally made the decision to resign as chairman of his department in the spring of 1997. He continued to practice at Memorial Sloan-Kettering, but he began to devote more of his time and attention to the pursuit of an effective treatment. While Heston tested the mice, Fair decided he was open to any approach to healing, including the New Agey stuff that he used to dismiss. (His son recalls his former references to "touchy-feely West Coast nonsense.") "Many of my colleagues think I'm bizarre," he says imperturbably, and describes his regular program of yoga, meditation, prayer, vitamins, and a high-soy, low-fat diet, which he has followed for the past year and a half. Relaxation has never come easily to him, and it still doesn't. "I went to California to a stress-reduction course," he told me, "and then I caught the red-eye back so I wouldn't miss any work." And, unlike many enthusiasts of alternative medicine, Dr. Fair has not abandoned his rational assessment of these techniques, and his expectations are modest. "I don't kid myself," he says. "What I know is that they are expanding my life, not necessarily extending it." His experience has even affected the way he talks to his own patients—he is now more likely to address their emotional concerns as well as their strictly physical ones. "As a doctor, he always went the extra mile, but he saw everything as either winning or losing," his son told me. "Now I think he realizes he can heal without curing."

In early August of 1997, Dr. Fair received further devastating news. A CAT scan revealed that a new mass of cancer had appeared in the lymph node near the liver; a recurrence had been expected, but not so soon. To find a mass only eight months after the palliative surgery suggested that the tumor was particularly aggressive. In an effort to slow the cancer's progress, Fair's colleagues recommended a toxic chemotherapy drug called CPT-11. Dr. Fair struggled with the advice. The drug had been developed generically, like all other chemotherapeutic agents—screened against prototype cancer-cell lines and

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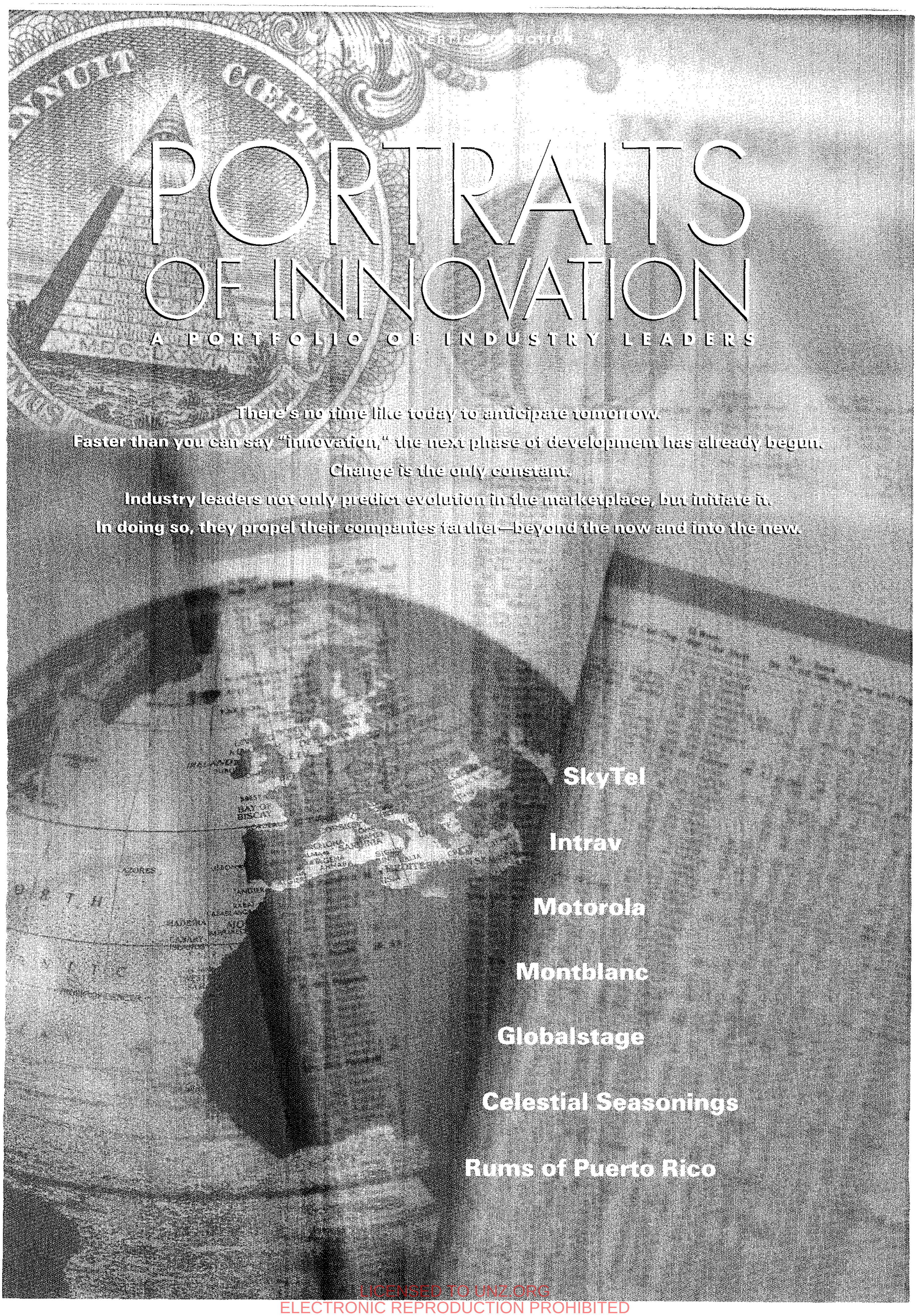

PORTRAITS OF INNOVATION

A PORTFOLIO OF INDUSTRY LEADERS

There's no time like today to anticipate tomorrow.
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Change is the only constant.
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In doing so, they propel their companies farther—beyond the now and into the new.

SkyTel

Intrav

Motorola

Montblanc

Globalstage

Celestial Seasonings

Rums of Puerto Rico

SKYTEL

WORLD IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND

John T. Stupka
President and CEO of SkyTel

Throw away your old-fashioned beeper; paging has evolved into "advanced text messaging." A scant three years ago, SkyTel pioneered an interactive, wireless messaging service. Words and whole sentences (not just telephone numbers) appeared on the pager screen. Now, SkyTel's lightweight, pocket-sized devices not only communicate with other pagers and page groups of people simultaneously, but also provide a wealth of diverse information. The devices send and receive e-mail messages and interact with the Internet. This summer brought MSNBC news updates, real-time stock quotes, and shipment tracking information for Emory Worldwide customers (shipments could already be tracked for other major carriers). And SkyTel is raising the ante yet again. This fall, customers can choose from up to eight broad categories of news—a preview of two hundred types of customized information lurking on the horizon.

No surprise then that the company's president and CEO is cellular telephone industry pioneer John T. Stupka. Stupka left an illustrious career with Southwestern Bell Mobile Systems because he found the SkyTel opportunity to transform a technology "an irresistible temptation."

What are your expectations and hopes for the future?

Stupka: Messaging is going to enjoy the same kind of growth over the next decade that cellular did after its initial period of incubation. Today, if you're an average person, you have telephones and maybe a cellular phone. You have voice mailboxes—one at home and one at work—and e-mail. All of us have "ports" for information and messages to get to us. But when we're away from them, there is always this anxiety of "what's going on in my absence?" With messaging, we allow you to know what's going on in your world at all times.

What about the cellular phone, which some would consider your competitor? With a cell phone, you're always connected.

Stupka: If you're primarily using a cell phone, you have to leave it on or forgo the information. So the calling party is in control. When you answer it, I gotcha. I control your time. With messaging, I send a message. You determine whether you'll respond immediately or reply to me later.

You said that e-mail popularity is leading the industry. Why?

Stupka: A recent Pitney Bowes study shows that the average office worker sends or receives 190 messages a day. Six out of ten calls placed do not reach their intended target. Contrast that to e-mail: You send it, and essentially a hundred percent of your messages reach the recipient. What makes messaging so powerful, and why people like it so much, is that it basically is just like e-mail. I input to others when I want, they respond to me when they want.

It has been said that fifty percent of new products and services to be sold in the twenty-first century have not been invented yet. How do you expect to stay ahead of your competition?

Stupka: First you realize that customers never buy technology; they buy goods and services. We're going to ask customers what we can do to make our services more useful. For example, you shouldn't have to go check your voicemail; you should *know* something is in your mailbox. So they came up with pager notification. I experience a slight vibration, look at my device, and it says, "voicemail." Now I have to suffer anxiety. Did my house burn down or is someone trying to sell me siding? The next step is to find out who it is from and is it important. With existing technology like caller ID, you solve the "who is it from" part. But you can also apply software and allow the sender to indicate whether the message is urgent or nonpriority. That's the kind of information that customers have told us they wanted.

How do you keep in contact with customers?

Stupka: We have surveys and focus groups, but we are fond of individual interviews. If you present your objectives clearly, customers are full of guidance. One thing they'll always tell you that they *don't* want is complexity. People want a messaging device; the key is to keep it simple and affordable and low-maintenance.

What are your greatest challenges and how do you meet them?

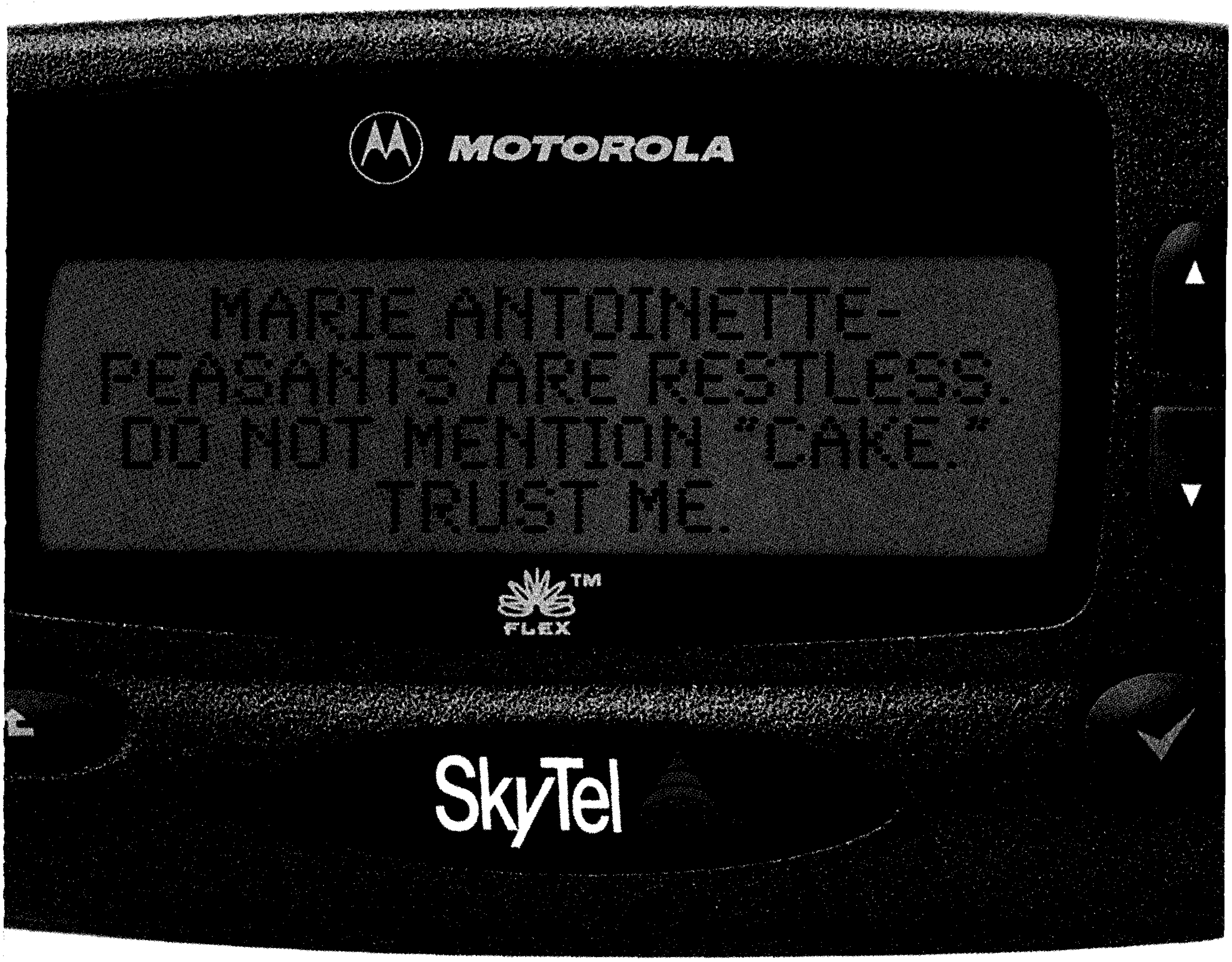
Stupka: Technology is coming at us so fast that if you don't focus, you're constantly going to be halfway in completing projects, then moving on to something else. You say: "There's a faster processor, a better code, a superior chip, a new algorithm," and you start the product all over again. State of the art just keeps changing on you. If I introduce a new product that will consolidate all your phones, but it takes two hours to explain, I can't sell it. People won't give me the two hours. I've got to do something that has such a friendly interface that people will gravitate toward it.

What defines you as a company?

Stupka: SkyTel pioneered nationwide paging. We were the first to petition the FCC for the frequencies and build the systems. Then SkyTel pioneered nationwide text messaging. We have two satellite links and redundant control centers so that in the unusual event that a satellite would go wacko, our customers could still be paged. A few months ago that happened, and we got lots of nice e-mail from customers saying, "This is why I pay a few extra dollars for SkyTel." So we have always been focused on value rather than price.

How do you engender creativity?

Stupka: Operate with as flat an organization as possible. The more layers you have, the harder it is to get creative. Keep it as informal as possible. Stay open to new ideas and give people credit. Never wrestle an idea away from the author; let him or her foster it.



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INTRAV

CHARTERING THEIR OWN COURSE

Paul H. Duynhouwer
President and CEO of INTRAV

Made plans for the Millennium yet? For $75,000 a head, you and ninety-five intimates can fill a specially configured Concorde and go around the world. Among the stops: Christmas in Hawaii, New Year's Eve in Hong Kong. Should you want to get away sooner, try an African safari, the Road to Mandalay, or an exotic jaunt from Machu Picchu to the Galapagos. INTRAV will take you there.

INTRAV was a pioneer in chartering flights before airline deregulation. After years of concentrating on group tours it acquired its small ship subsidiary, Clipper Cruise Line, went public a couple of years ago, and changed course again. Its new focus is well-educated, affluent Americans (fifty and over) who are living longer, more active lives and who have discerning tastes. Spearheading this new course is industry veteran (and former jazz trombonist) Paul Duynhouwer, no stranger to change. A Clipper Line executive in 1982, he left the company but rejoined it seven years later to make it adventure-oriented. He took over INTRAV in 1996 to promote luxury programs for upscale travelers.

What are the defining characteristics of your company?

Duynhouwer: We provide the antidote to huge cruise ships and crowded planes. We charter aircraft that normally would hold, say, 360 passengers and configure the plane for 86 passengers, providing more comfortable arrangements. By chartering planes we control the quality of the on-board experience all the way to the destination. The airplane charters and the small ship adventures, including the Clipper and the ships we charter throughout Europe, are basically what we do.

How do you stand out from the competion?

Duynhouwer: Our main challenge is to find unspoiled places that have natural beauty and cultural interest, where you can still have a quiet moment. The biggest threat to tourism is crowded conditions. An important part of our business is small ships, through our Clipper subsidiary. Unlike the big shoeboxes floating out of Miami every two days, small ships let you access remote places with little or no infrastructure. You can equip a small ship with inflatable rubber Zodiac landing craft that seat anywhere from four to sixteen people. When we're on a fjord in Greenland, we simply use those little boats to take passengers ashore. It is that type of tourism that we see becoming more and more important in the future.

What are your expectations and hopes for Intrav?

Duynhouwer: We're increasing our fleet of small ships. None hold more than 138 passengers. Affluent, educated people overwhelmingly prefer small ships to larger ones. These are ships where you will not find gambling or bingo. Instead, when we go on the Amazon River, we'll have botanists and naturalists talking about the natural world. It is that small ship ambiance that we offer.

In past eras, the atmosphere on board ship was very subdued and elegant. They had a trio in the bar upstairs after dinner where people could just have a drink and dance a little, but there were no variety shows or Las Vegas showgirls. Every night at sea used to be formal, in a beautiful dining room. Waiters spoke four or five languages; it was a refined experience. People who used to enjoy that type of an experience want to go with us today.

In two or three years, you will see 3,000-passenger ships. Cruise operators discovered how the numbers work. Get them on at a low price, and you have a captive audience. The bulk of profit cruise lines make today is no longer on the tickets they sell you. The margins are made on board ship. There are now ships that have a cover charge if you want to have dinner in a certain dining room; everything's extra. We can show our product as a desirable alternative to their crass commercialism. They make our marketing easy.

How exactly do your market your product?

Duynhouwer: We've been able to make a very nice living through direct mail. We try to write brochures that are readable and not loaded down with hyperbole. Education is definitely the mission. Our customer is the type to be involved in the Internet, and we're spending tens of thousands of dollars to make our websites more compelling and user-friendly. We use the Internet for information but not for booking; we let travel agents do that. Our strength is designing good travel programs.

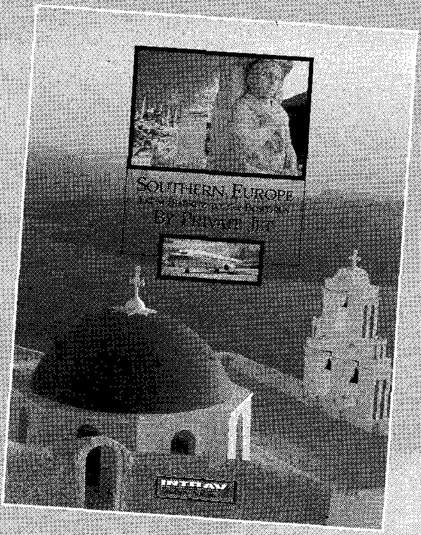
What are your greatest challenges and how do you respond to them?

Duynhouwer: I see it purely as a creative business. I tend to spend most of my time in dialogue with employees, challenging them to find pristine environments, where you're not regulated to death, and which are fairly immune to commercialism. You also must have the courage to market the unknown.

There are individuals who like a remote, adventurous travel experience and do not mind hiking with boots on in conditions that could be a little cumbersome. They could go on a cruise on the Clipper Adventurer and get a very nice, but not luxurious, cabin. That ship, right now, is in Baffin Island, in the Canadian Arctic. They go ashore in a Zodiac and visit an Inuit village where the basic comfort level is probably a little oil stove or something like that. For those who would complain bitterly if we exposed them to that type of experience, we design a more luxurious travel vacation. A person who spends $56,000 to go around the world on the Concorde is comfort-oriented; they want luxury and status. Going in a Concorde gives you bragging rights. So, we cover the whole spectrum.

The Antidote to Crowded Planes and Huge Cruise Ships...

INTRAV *Private Jet Adventures*



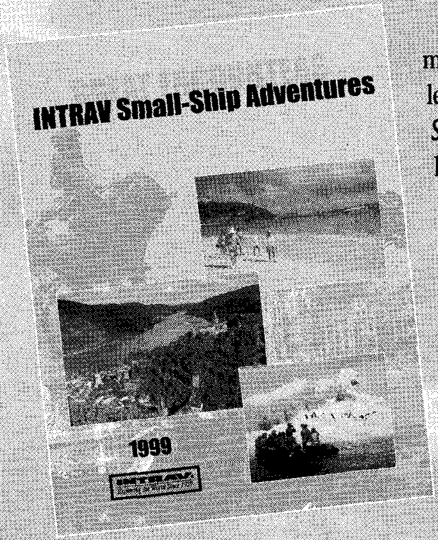
Remember the last time your airline flight was the best part of your vacation? When half the fun was getting there? INTRAV pioneered the use of chartered aircraft in the 1960s for custom-designed tours of Europe, Asia and Africa. So it is only natural that we've taken the lead in the 1990s with exclusive jet adventures aboard privately chartered and superbly outfitted aircraft.

Our *Around the World by Private Concorde* has sold out 24 times, a record unmatched in the industry. In 1999, join us for an all-new 24-day circumnavigation aboard this 98-passenger supersonic plane, including stops at Easter Island, the Great Barrier Reef and Istanbul.

Other 1999 programs include *Southern Europe from Biarritz to the Bosporus*, a brand-new 18-day journey aboard our luxury 737, normally accommodating 120, but reconfigured for just 44 passengers. Visit Geneva, Madeira, Capri, Santorini and Istanbul, with day trips to Bilbao's new Guggenheim Museum, Granada's Alhambra Palace and the archaeological wonders of Ephesus.

While aboard our jets, enjoy the most comfortable seating and the finest food and service in the air today. And on the ground, exceptional hotels, restaurants and sightseeing opportunities are reserved for our guests — private cruises, hot-air ballooning over Africa's game parks, helicopter flights and private receptions. Everything is included. Join us to experience travel "Beyond First Class."

INTRAV *Small-Ship Adventures*



Seeking refuge from the hurried package tours and giant floating entertainment palaces of today? INTRAV Small-Ship Adventures offers you an unparalleled choice of the world's best small ships. From luxury craft like the *Sea Goddess*, *Song of Flower* and *Silver Cloud* to vessels of exploration and discovery like the new *Clipper Adventurer* and Swan Hellenic's *Minerva*. From the finest European riverboats to popular domestic cruises aboard the all-American *Nantucket Clipper* and *Yorktown Clipper*.

INTRAV is the expert in small-ship cruising, chartering vessels for American travelers in Europe and elsewhere since the early 1970s. We go where the big ships cannot — through narrow waterways, to tiny docks in the center of town, hidden fjords and uninhabited islands — places that are never overwhelmed by our visits. Our 80-page, 1999 catalog describes in detail more than 30 worldwide itineraries aboard 14 unique vessels, each accommodating from just 32 to 300 guests.

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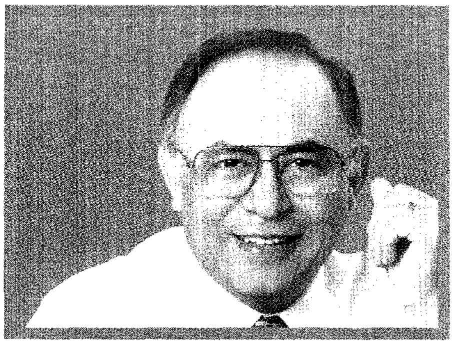


Hector Ruiz, President of Motorola's Semiconductor Products Sector

This spring, Motorola introduced DigitalDNA™, the company's brand for silicon-based technologies that stretch the limits of the imagination. DigitalDNA represents the latest breakthrough in the forty-year-old, $140-billion-strong semiconductor business, an industry marked by rapid change and breathtaking inventiveness. DigitalDNA is the embodiment of Motorola's initiative, exploration, and development.

The move reinforces the company's global market leadership in providing the silicon ingredients for a broad array of products in our digital world. Leading the initiative is the president of Motorola's Semiconductor Products Sector, Hector Ruiz, a man truly at ease in today's digital world.

What is DigitalDNA and how does it fit into the Motorola strategy?

Ruiz: DigitalDNA represents our ability to create exciting embedded solutions that make your life better. It's the stuff that breathes life into products, from simple things such as a coffeemaker to complex things like a computer. Computing is moving off desktops and laptops into cars, entertainment systems, and personal communications systems. We believe that the business of computing is undergoing dramatic and fundamental change, and the common denominator behind all this change is DigitalDNA from Motorola.

How does DigitalDNA work?

Ruiz: Consumers now want products that are smart, intuitive, and easy to use. They want cars that adjust the seats, mirrors, and sound systems with the touch of a button. They want to use their television sets to access the World Wide Web. They want to be able to return e-mails while watching their kids play soccer. We're helping our clients deliver those "real world" solutions to their customers.

In the end, DigitalDNA's embedded solutions must have the ability to both learn and perform the tasks consumers require of them.

Is DigitalDNA an embedded silicon chip?

Ruiz: Absolutely. You see, embedded chips have intelligence built right into them. So intelligence is literally "embedded" into the chip giving it the ability to learn and perform in specific ways.

How pervasive is DigitalDNA?

Ruiz: There's not a single person in the modern world today whose life does not, in some form, have Motorola DigitalDNA in it. Right now, experts estimate fifteen billion microchips are powering consumer products around the world. The average U.S. household has between thirty-five and fifty microprocessors at work. We did a survey that showed that from the time a person gets up and arrives at work, they come in contact with fourteen different DigitalDNA products by Motorola. And this is just the beginning of a golden age for microprocessors. As computing jumps off the desk and into the lives of real people, you'll see a quantum leap in the use of DigitalDNA solutions.

What are some other applications for DigitalDNA?

Ruiz: That remote controlled "rover," which drove across the surface of Mars and sent back high-definition digital pictures, was DigitalDNA at work. There's also a machine that does three-dimensional representations of tumors, which enables doctors to be much more precise in applying radiation therapy. Even the vivid sounds that consumers hear when using the Sony PlayStation are enabled by DigitalDNA.

What is Blackbird?

Ruiz: It's a revolutionary home multimedia system. Blackbird enables consumers to merge and control their video entertainment systems with their video communications systems in one elegant solution. In short, with Blackbird, people will use their cable TV to surf the web, play video games, make telephone calls, watch TV, or play digital video discs. It will be available next year.

Assess your competition.

Ruiz: Motorola is the world leader in embedded solutions. Our competition is both everyone and no one in a broadly defined industry we call "embedded space." There are numerous companies that compete with us in one or two of the specific pieces of our total solution. But no one offers the depth and breadth of our embedded technology.

How will you maintain your lead?

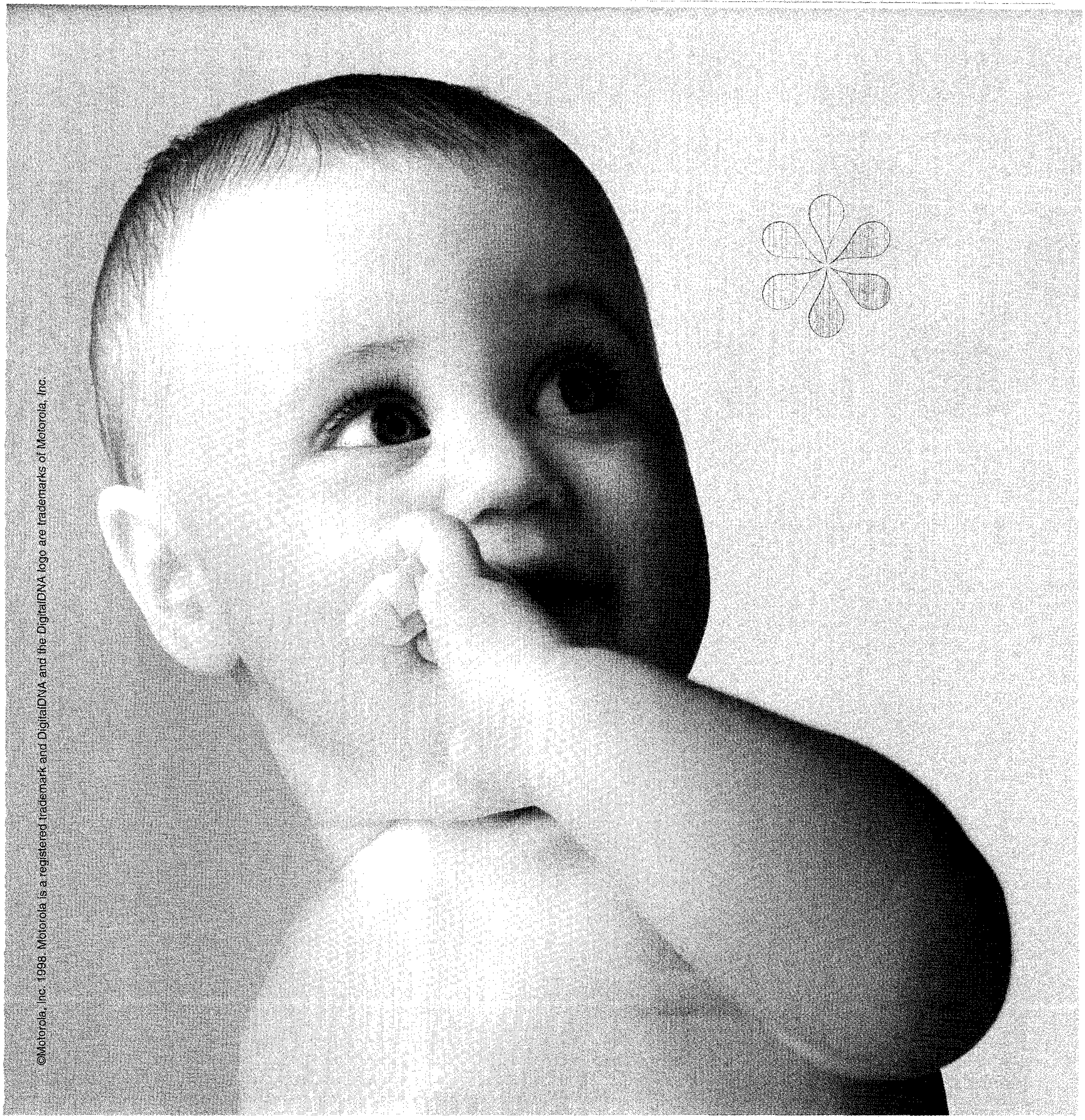
Ruiz: We will invest in technology to stay on the leading edge. We have built unique customer relationships that put us in a very strong position to benefit from the explosion of embedded solutions. We are at the crossroads between stand-alone technologies and a new world of connectivity. But within three years or less, consumers will be given remote, interactive, customized, and real-time control over their environment.

How quickly is the industry developing?

Ruiz: This industry is about forty years old and in that time the market has grown to about $140 billion. Most people would say, when you get to that size, the industry is mature. I would say the opposite. We're only in the embryonic stages of smart, intuitive, easy-to-use technology.

What does the future hold for DigitalDNA?

Ruiz: The future is limitless. We're banking on it.



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It's in the baby monitor that lets you see her as well as hear her. It's what makes taking her temperature as easy as taking her picture–which it also helps you do. It's even in her favorite teddy bear. Alas, it is nowhere near her poopy diapers.

DigitalDNA™
from Motorola

IT'S HERE.

MONTBLANC

THE FUTURE OF TIMELESSNESS

Norbert A. Platt
President and CEO of Montblanc

In a world devalued by technology, the need for things that preserve the moment is the philosophy behind the classic, timeless designs from Montblanc. Since 1908, Montblanc has handcrafted writing instruments and, over the years, expanded its distinguished cache to include watches, leather goods, desk accessories, eyewear, men's jewelry, and hand-lettered stationery. For decades it has drawn loyal customers seeking classic elegance. Devotees in seventy countries collect Montblanc pens, and even buy them at auction.

As impermanence and the tyranny of efficiency challenge our souls, Montblanc responds in an irresistibly traditional fashion. Winding an Arabic numeral watch offers an opportunity to respect the treasure of time. Montblanc's finely wrought diamond-set *Meisterstück Solitaire Royale*, the costliest pen in the world, embodies the essence of luxury. And the *Entre Nous* pen with a removable gold hoop can be engraved with a secret message making it the ultimate personal gift.

What does the Montblanc brand represent and how do you maintain its integrity?

Platt: Montblanc is about passion and soul. We make products to help people stop and savor the moment—products that are handcrafted with the finest materials and built to last from generation to generation. This applies not only to our collection, but will apply to any other products which we decide to introduce.

How does the company grow while offering products that last a lifetime; how many pens does any one person need?

Platt: No one needs to buy a Montblanc. We are not selling a product; we're selling a lifestyle. Our customers fall in love with Montblanc, and therefore want to have many. No one needs our tiny *Hommage à Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart* writing instrument, but it is an expression of genius. No one needs to collect our limited edition Writers' Series, but we have customers who buy every writing instrument we make. We grow by diversifying into new areas and reaching new customers.

In the U.S., Montblanc is a recent "celebrity" in films and television. Since tastes are fickle and overexposure undesirable, how does the company manage its "talented" accessories?

Platt: Because a Montblanc is an icon of popular culture, it is often used in films and on TV to help substantiate character. My favorite episode involved a character in "NYPD Blue" who had to turn his daughter in because she had stolen his Montblanc. It was a gift from his own father upon his graduating law school. This plot demonstrated Montblanc's sentimental value even more than its actual value. We get hundreds of requests from producers every year, but we are very discriminating about saying yes.

Who is your competition and how are you different?

Platt: If you are talking writing instruments, we have no competition. Either you buy a Bic because you need to write, or you buy a Montblanc because of what it represents. There is no reason to buy anything in between. But we are more than writing instruments. We are a luxury brand and compete with all the classic European luxury brands.

When and why did you join Montblanc?

Platt: I joined Montblanc in 1987 for the ultimate challenge: taking one of the most classic cult objects, which happened to write, and building around it a world-class luxury brand. I was formerly Managing Director of Rollei, one of the greatest cameras ever made. By training I am an engineer, which makes me fastidious about the handcrafting of our products.

How is your corporate philosophy affected by the increasing pace of technology, globalization, and the Internet?

Platt: As the world keeps winding up, we unwind. Technology has created a need to step back and take a deep breath. Our corporate philosophy is "de-acceleration," a cyber-backlash. Consumers crave things that preserve the moment. We provide that. Think about slowly filling a fountain pen and writing a letter, or hand winding our exclusive *Réserve de Marche*, the heart of the *Meisterstück* watch collection.

What are your expectations and hopes for the future?

Platt: I hope that we will become known for our visionary support for culture and the arts. In 1992, Montblanc created the *Fondation d'Entreprise Montblanc de la Culture* to promote culture and encourage intellectual enrichment. We have spearheaded a campaign for increased worldwide arts patronage by awarding international patrons of the arts and encouraging others to do the same.

We are founding sponsors of the Philharmonia of the Nations. This orchestra, with more than ninety musicians from forty countries, is a dream of Leonard Bernstein to promote peace worldwide by using a language everybody understands: music. Our Montblanc culture award, which we present in ten countries each year, demonstrates how a small company can effect change and have a positive impact on the arts.

How do you institutionalize creativity?

Platt: I want our people to feel passionate about our brand. This requires them to voice opinions. In the heat of debate, they may go over the edge, even antagonize peers and superiors! This is okay. I want people to be emotional and sometimes even irrational. This furthers creativity, new ideas, and future-oriented thinking.

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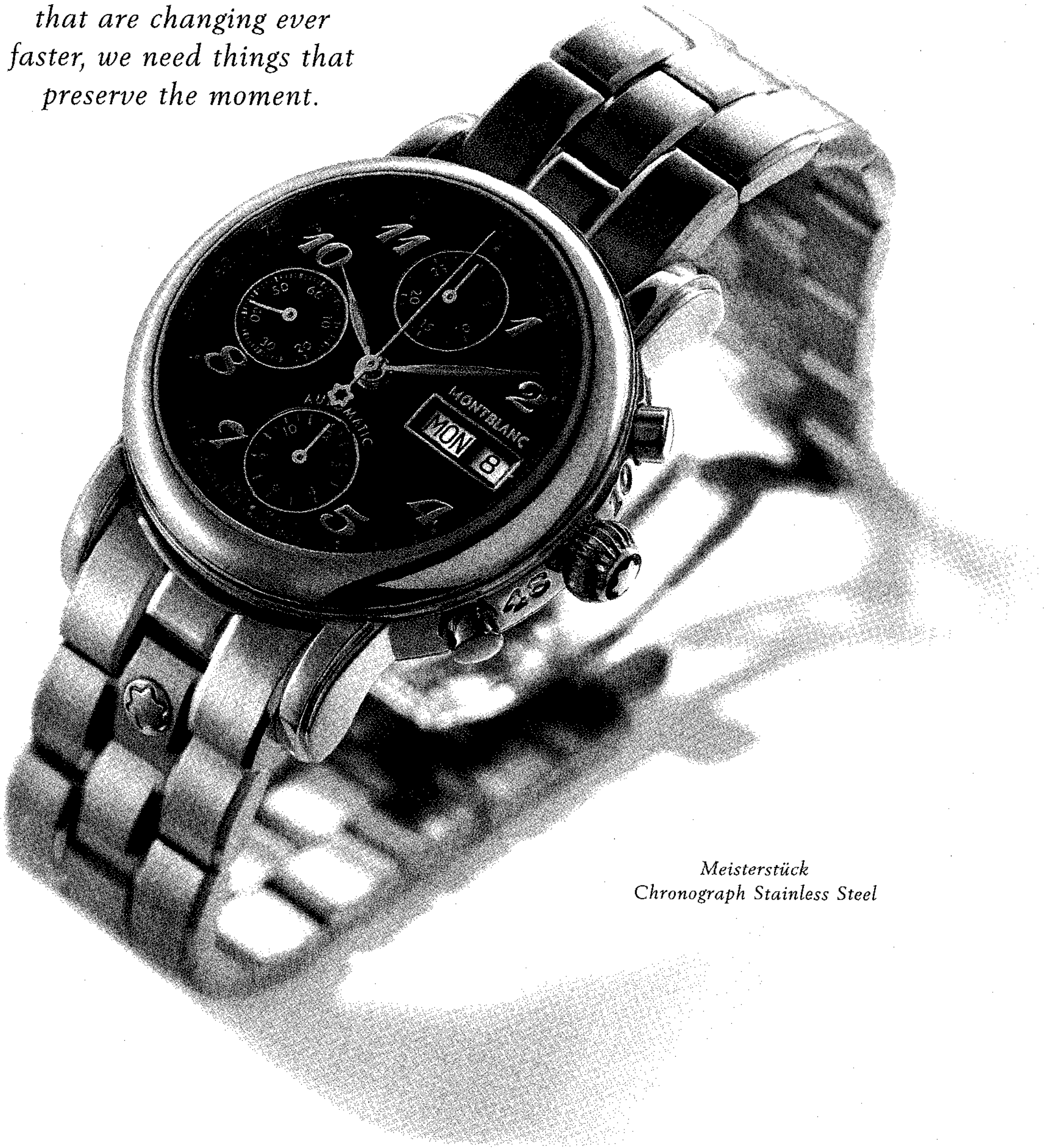

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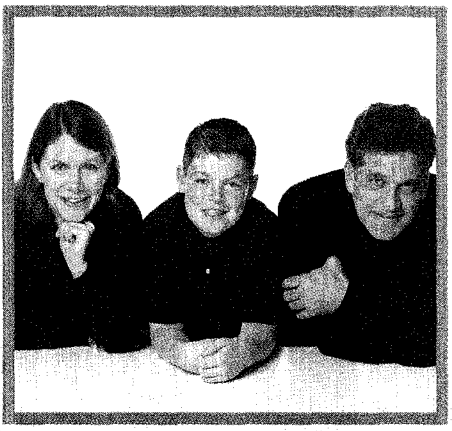
GLOBALSTAGE

STAGE PRESENCE IN CHILDREN'S VIDEOS



Libby Pratt, President and CEO of Globalstage, with son Preston and husband and CFO, Craig Resnick

Libby Pratt has no formal background in theatre, film, or education. Yet, dissatisfied with the status quo of children's entertainment, this options trader, former television reporter, and mother has created Globalstage, a critically acclaimed production company dedicated to capturing superior children's theatre on video. Conscientiously crafted for kids, the videos are proving to have enormous appeal for adults as well.

Pratt roams the world accompanied by her twelve-year-old son, Preston, who has final say on Globalstage's selections. Produced by the BBC, each imaginatively filmed play becomes the centerpiece for an engaging video voyage into the world of the production itself. Every work is framed by a running dialogue between Preston and renowned professor, Elizabeth McNamer, who raised five children herself. A booklet discusses the social and historical meanings of each piece. Globalstage's productions have been compared to the widely lauded PBS Masterpiece Theater series.

What was your inspiration for Globalstage?

Pratt: I really felt that television was a waste of time so I didn't let Preston watch it. One day it dawned on me that I couldn't just wait around for someone to produce really high quality entertainment for kids. I needed to take the plunge myself. Every video we create begins with the assumption that kids are smart.

Kids can absorb a lot more information than we give them credit for, and they are starved for entertainment that respects their intellect. Much to the surprise of his parents, my four-year-old nephew, Ethan, is now quite the expert on Mary Shelley after repeated viewings of one of our productions, "Frankenstein."

What does mainstream entertainment lack?

Pratt: When I worked for a television station, they told me to assume that our adult viewers had a seventh grade education. Everything "mainstream" is dumbed down to the lowest common denominator. Content doesn't matter. What matters is how many cheap, plastic action figures or hamburgers a film can sell. At Globalstage, content is paramount for us.

How do you find plays and what's your criteria?

Pratt: After a lot of research, we developed a list of the best theatres in Europe and North America. I'm also looking into Central America and Mexico and eventually we'll be searching other countries. We seek subject matter that is provocative and meaty enough for adults as well as children. We look for pieces that emotionally involve the viewer, and that represent a joyous entertainment experience.

I take Preston with me when I'm scouting, and if we both agree that the piece is wonderful, then I know we have found a gem that transcends generational barriers. Our videos do contain some violence, sexism, and racism because the plays reflect the societies from which they come. But we deal with these issues. For example, in our "Far From the Madding Crowd" video, Elizabeth and Preston discuss the injustice of the class system in Victorian England and how it affects the characters in the play.

What are you doing to stay ahead of the pack?

Pratt: We ignore what the competition is doing. I feel that by marching to the beat of our own drummer, no matter how out of step we are, we are creating our own niche. We want to produce something that has nothing to do with the entertainment that is currently out there.

How do you market your product?

Pratt: We direct market (and you can find us in some stores and the PBS catalog) because we love our viewers' input, and we can ignore all the distributors who say we're too sophisticated for their customers. By direct marketing, we can create exactly what we think our educated customer wants. Subscribers e-mail Preston and Elizabeth to chat with them about the issues raised in the videos. That tells me that kids are really hungry for what we offer.

You have said that preconceptions are your biggest challenge. What are they?

Pratt: If we use the term "family entertainment," people think we're straitlaced and dull. But, we're really quite provocative. Everyone thinks a children's video is not interesting enough for an adult, but after they watch our videos they tell us that they enjoy them as much as their kids. We aren't just sticking a camera in the audience. We've created a hybrid that combines moviemaking with a live performance.

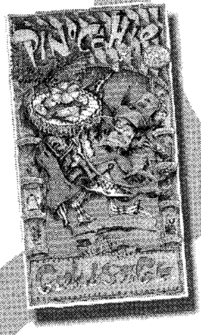
What are your expectations and hopes for Globalstage's future?

Pratt: I want people to consider us the most trusted creator of family entertainment. From the Greeks to Shakespeare, the point of great theatre is to entertain people, as well as to present the innovative thoughts of the culture, explore moral dilemmas, and prod the viewer to think. That's what family entertainment has lost, and that's what we're capturing with our videos.

Pratt set up the company as a family affair and appointed her husband, Craig Resnick, chief financial officer. Resnick is now involved in every aspect of the growing business (right down to producing the video sleeve graphics). He was on hand to comment on his vision for Globalstage.

Resnick: At first I thought my wife was a nut, and she'd risked our life savings. We're going against the huge tide of pop culture. But it's gratifying to hear from people that our videos prompt their kids and grandkids to talk with them about life, love, and death. I've been an options trader all of my adult life but it's infinitely more rewarding to be building a company like Globalstage. We may *both* be crazy, but we're really having a great time.

international theatre videos for the entire family!



GLOBALSTAGE brings high quality, international theatre to your home.

We travel the world to find unique plays that spark the imagination, delight the senses, and challenge the mind.

The plays are creatively filmed by the BBC to capture the vibrancy and drama of each performance.

With a GLOBALSTAGE subscription you'll receive a new video every three months, giving you a consistent source of family entertainment.

Each video is hosted by Professor Elizabeth McNamer, a dynamic guide who explores the cultural theory and historical significance of the plays with her twelve-year-old sidekick, Preston.

You'll enjoy going behind the scenes with them to meet writers, composers, actors and designers.

A fun booklet comes with every video to give you the inside scoop on each play.

"Makes for high quality home viewing. And once the show begins, the skillful filming recalls the heights of BBC's wonderful old Masterpiece Theatre- this time crafted for kids, with enough depth for their adult companions to explore and enjoy.
★★★½"
-Nancy Churnin
Dallas Morning News

"Highly Recommended... A genuine winner.
★★★½"
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CELESTIAL SEASONINGS

NATURE AND NURTURE IN A CAPSULE

Stephen B. Hughes
President and CEO of Celestial Seasonings

Thirty years ago, Celestial Seasonings introduced herbal teas to the U.S. market. Today, it is the largest supplier of herbal teas in the country. Having earned consumer trust and recognition in the marketplace, Celestial Seasonings is bringing its skills and experience to a new line of herbal supplements.

Due in part to the attention functional herbs like Gingko and St. John's Wort have received, and because of the positive publicity green tea is enjoying, the company's projected revenue will exceed a hundred million dollars this year—a twenty-five percent increase over 1997 revenue. President and CEO Stephen Hughes has plans to leverage the brand even further.

How are you applying your strengths in the herbal tea market to the herbal supplement market?

Hughes: We've spent thirty years developing a network that, when it comes to sourcing botanical and herbal products, is as good as any in the world.

There are other herbal supplements available. What makes yours different?

Hughes: A lot of consumers are aware of the benefits of herbs but they may not have confidence in other brands out there. Our research has shown us that our brand is the one people trust.

What is standardization, and how does it affect the quality of your product?

Hughes: The standardization process is one by which the active ingredients are extracted from the whole herb and delivered in a consistent dosage in each capsule. You get exact dosing and the precise active ingredients you're looking for in every pill. A lot of products out there today are just ground-up whole herbs with a lot of inconsistency and little or no efficacy.

Part of Celestial Seasonings' success rests on educating consumers to the benefits of herbal tea. Are you extending that same approach to your herbal supplements?

Hughes: Yes. At the point of sale, the carton provides the consumer with as much information as we can, and this is as important as the product.

How extensive is the herbal supplement line?

Hughes: We have seventeen products. Nine are sub-brands of our teas, such as Sleepytime, that focus on a specific condition, like sleeplessness. Eight products are extracts of single herbs, like pure St. John's Wort for mild depression.

Will you be expanding the line?

Hughes: Sure. We're going to extend our line of supplements a bit, but we're also going to leverage it off our teas, with matching teas—Echinacea Cold Season, Mood Mender, GingkoSharp—for every one of our condition-specific products. (One cup of tea will equal one-half the potency of a capsule.) We are looking to bring all of our experience to the capsule format, but we are also going to have matching teas. We're in the process of launching them now.

Are you planning any other new applications?

Hughes: We're exploring three or four other product formats that could be appropriate down the line.

What qualities make you an industry leader?

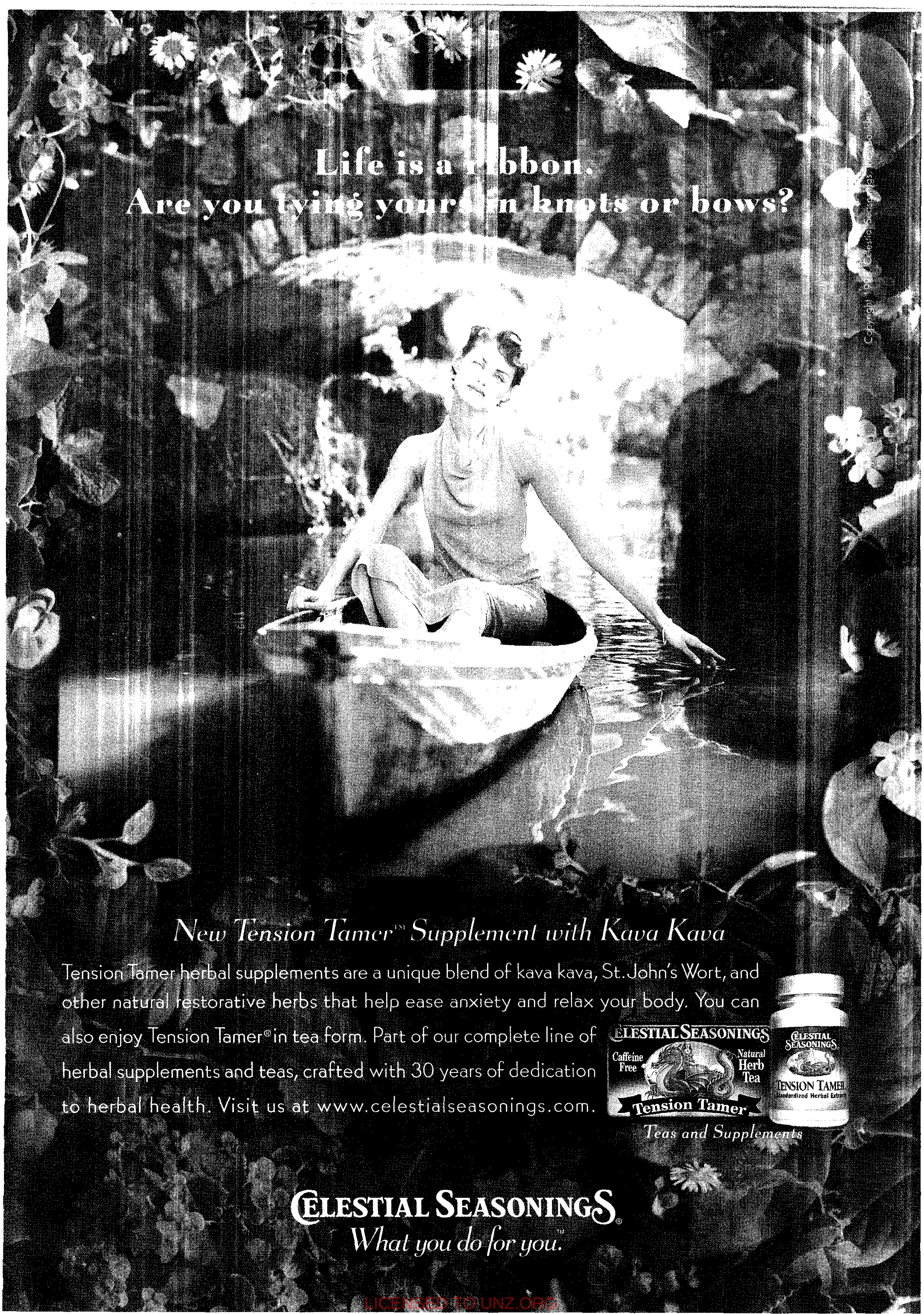
Hughes: Boulder, Colorado is a mecca for the natural foods industry. We came out of that industry and we've never lost our roots. And you can see that what's happening in natural foods today is an early indicator of what's going to be successful in the broader market five years from now. By being so involved in the natural foods industry, we have a real advantage to see tomorrow's mass-market opportunities today.

How does the company encourage innovative thinking?

Hughes: We have a team approach. We try to empower people. We've tried to attract people who love to build businesses and encourage them. We have a stock option program that allows employees to share in the growth of the company. And we have a focus on continuous improvement—a how-do-we-do-it-better, how-do-we-do-it-faster, how-do-we-do-it-cheaper kind of mindset.

How have you captured the U.S. market with only 250 employees?

Hughes: The tea business is a great economic model. You can make a lot of tea without a lot of capital or a lot of people. Plus, it's not a traditional work environment. We have a family, with minimal distractions and minimal aggravations. I've never worked with a more talented or more committed group in my career. Working with Celestial isn't a job, it's a way of life.



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RUMS OF PUERTO RICO

ISLAND OF GRACE AND GROWTH

Jaime Morgan-Stubbe, Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company

With its advanced telecommunications, supportive high-technology environment, and the pro-business initiatives of Governor Pedro Rosello, Puerto Rico has shown remarkable success in attracting U.S. and foreign business to its shores. Executives such as Jaime Morgan-Stubbe of the Puerto Rico Industrial Development Company (PRIDCO) are effectively carrying out the governor's ambitious mandate for change. Prior to his position with PRIDCO, Morgan distinguished himself as head of the Puerto Rico Maritime Shipping Authority, where his goal was to turn the government-owned shipping company around and render it more appealing to the private sector. So successful was he that during his tenure, sales and revenue increased, thus clearing the way for the privatization of the public corporation.

We talked to Morgan about the future of economic growth and business in Puerto Rico, along with some of his strategies for marketing Rums of Puerto Rico, a PRIDCO division.

What are the advantages of locating a business in Puerto Rico today?

Morgan: Puerto Rico has been a part of the United States for a hundred years. All companies operating in Puerto Rico are protected by U.S. laws and regulations, and products manufactured here can carry the "Made in the U.S.A." label. The island enjoys economic and political stability and the work force is bilingual, with English as the official business language.

How has doing business in Puerto Rico changed in the last few years?

Morgan: Puerto Rican government and economic leaders are doing more than ever to offer unparalleled tax breaks and investment incentives. The 1998 Tax Incentives Act brought, among other things, a cut in corporate income taxes from fourteen and a half percent to a maximum of seven percent, with some rates as low as two percent. These latest developments are taking place under the governor's New Economic Development Model, which is designed so that free-market forces will stimulate growth.

Can you explain the role of PRIDCO?

Morgan: PRIDCO helps businesses negotiate regulatory processes and obtain permits through its "Fast Track" program which, in some cases, shortens the process to less than thirty days. PRIDCO also oversees industrial taxes and constructs and leases factory shells to house industrial operations. Our business advocacy programs are already paving the way for smoother relocation to Puerto Rico or expansion for many businesses.

How have the communications systems in Puerto Rico kept pace with the rest of the world in terms of technology?

Morgan: Puerto Rico is equipped with a telecommunications system that rivals any in the industrial world, with a fiber-optic loop that supports more than 1.4 million lines and multiple local and long-distance carriers. The island is linked to the U.S. mainland, Europe, and the Caribbean by high-capacity undersea fiber-optic cables and a top-notch satellite network. The Puerto Rico Telephone Company was recently privatized, with GTE acquiring controlling interest.

Does the fact that Puerto Rico is an island provide a stumbling block with regard to transporting goods?

Morgan: The Rossello administration has invested more than $7.6 billion since 1993 to improve Puerto Rico's infrastructure, and the work is paying off. More than 14,600 miles of paved roads, including an expressway and superhighway, assure that virtually all manufacturing and service companies are within two hours of a seaport or airport. In terms of cargo movement, San Juan's seaport ranks among the world's top seventeen and its airport ranks twenty-third among the 114 major U.S. airports.

How successful has Puerto Rico been in luring business to the island from foreign countries?

Morgan: Our leadership is reaching out across the globe. Since the island is located at the northeast entrance to the Caribbean, and it intersects trade routes from North America and Europe to Latin America and the Caribbean, its strength nearly sells itself. In addition to our strategic location, several special Foreign Trade Zones offer inducements for manufacturers who depend on imported materials and whose products are shipped to U.S. and world markets.

What is the theme of your new Rums of Puerto Rico advertising campaign?

Morgan: It celebrates Puerto Rico's more than four centuries of rum production and supports those brands being made here. A three-pronged approach targets twenty-one to thirty-four-year-olds. Phase one has the tag line: "Are Rums of Puerto Rico the finest because they've been around for four hundred years? Or have they been around for four hundred years because they are the finest?" The second phase consists of ads set in Old San Juan that capture the rich culture of historic Puerto Rico. The third phase incorporates the branded ads of Bacardi, Captain Morgan, Ronrico, and Don Q in the context of a Rums of Puerto Rico message.

What would you tell someone weighing the prospects for doing business in Puerto Rico?

Morgan: Our message is simple. Puerto Rico's assets can benefit any company's bottom line. From our natural beauty and pro-business government, to our skilled, productive workers and solid infrastructure, Puerto Rico has the perfect business climate.

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Rums of Puerto Rico. Enjoy them! (that's the spirit!)

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Puerto Rican Rum. Make sure it's on the label.

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RUMS of PUERTO RICO

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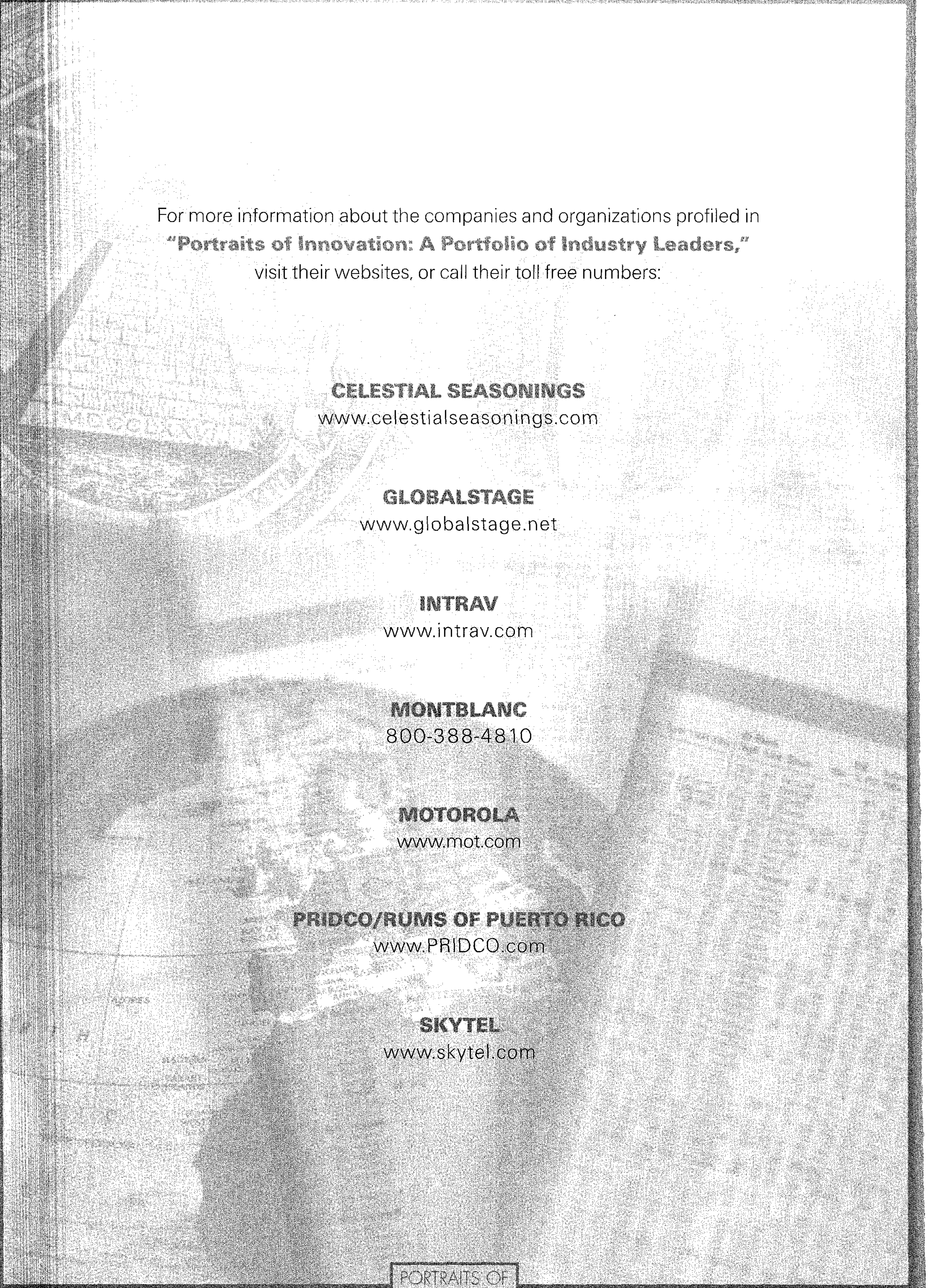

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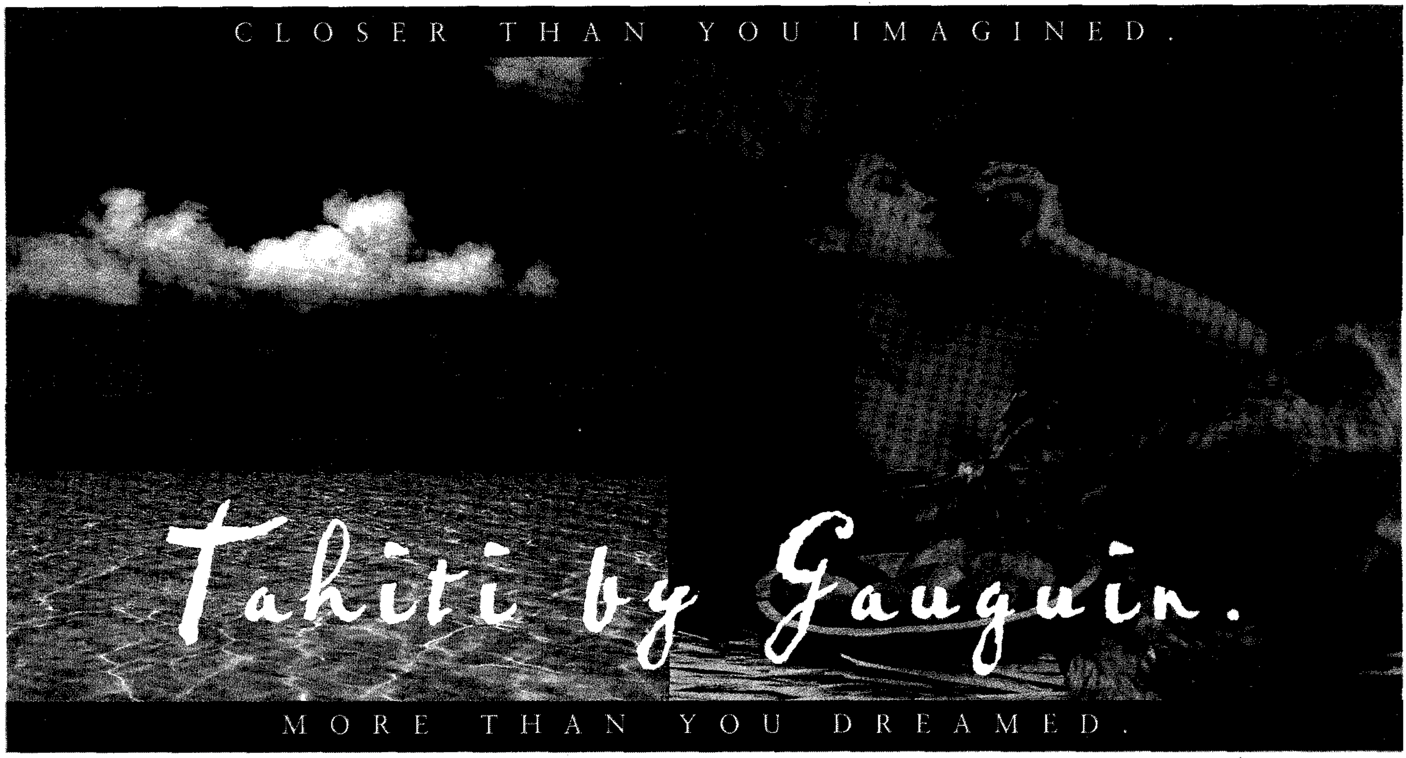
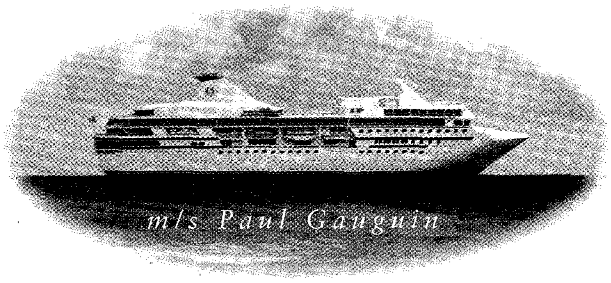


Just seven and a half hours from Los Angeles, you will find tiny worlds so breathtaking even the word paradise seems inadequate. Welcome to the islands of Tahiti aboard the sparkling new m/s Paul Gauguin. Named after the artist who painted an enduring vision of this place on the soul of a planet, the 320-guest Gauguin sails from Tahiti to the spectacular islands of Rangiroa, Raiatea, Bora Bora, and Moorea. ❧ *On each of her year-round, seven-night cruises, the ship features all ocean view staterooms (50% with private balconies), one of the world's highest space-to-guest ratios, superb cuisine inspired by 2-star Michelin French chef Jean-Pierre Vigato, a spa by legendary Carita of Paris, a state-of-the-art watersports platform and much more.* ❧ *Launched in the six-star tradition of Radisson Seven Seas Cruises, the m/s Paul Gauguin, like the other ships in the fleet — the ssc Radisson Diamond, the m/s Song of Flower, the m/s Hanseatic and the m/s Bremen — takes you to destinations beyond imagination. In a style, that is itself, a dream.*



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then given to end-stage cancer patients. It had a very small chance of causing significant shrinkage of his tumor and no real likelihood of eliminating it. "If you have only a hammer, everything looks like a nail," he concluded. There had to be something else at hand. He had his experimental animals all set up. Now he just needed something to test on them.

He came up with two agents, reaching into the past for one and into the future for the other. The first was a Chinese herb, packaged and available under the name "SPES." The second was a tumor vaccine. Both preparations were selected rationally, using the tumor cells that Dr. Heston was growing in the incubator and in his mice. Both represent powerful trends that promise to have a notable impact on contemporary medicine.

IT'S easy to imagine how the old Dr. Fair would have regarded talk of treating cancer with herbs: narrowed eyes, flared nostrils, and all. Alternative medicine has customarily been long on promises and short on research—an area where charlatans prey upon people who are at their most susceptible. At the same time, it's hard to ignore three thousand years of Asian empiricism. Besides, important drugs in cancer therapy have been derived from botanical sources: Taxol, for breast and ovarian tumors, from the needles of the Pacific yew tree; vincristine, for lymphoma and leukemia, from the periwinkle plant. In a similar way, folk experience with purple foxglove for dropsy led to the identification and use of digitalis for heart failure, and the indigenous use of cinchona bark for malaria led to quinine and chloroquine pills for the malady.

These days, the major pharmaceutical companies have been searching actively for new therapies derived from exotic-seeming natural sources. For example, Dr. Roger Perlmutter, the senior vice-president for basic research at Merck, oversees projects that collect samples from giraffe dung in Namibia, geysers in Iceland, plants on Tonga, and sea worms in Guam. These natural products are processed through high-intensity enzyme screens in an effort to identify new antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and anticancer compounds.

Dr. Sophie Chen, a biophysicist, conducted similar research at Merck. She's now a professor at New York Medical College, but William Fair first encountered her, in September of 1997, at a meeting at Lake Tahoe sponsored by CaP CURE, the charity that Michael Milken had set up to help fight prostate cancer. Dr. Fair, in his professional capacity, described his program's interest in developing new treatments for prostate cancer, and Dr. Chen told him about some work she was doing in conjunction with Professor Xu-Hui Wang, the director of traditional Chinese medicine at Shanghai Medical University.

Dr. Wang's great-grandfather had been a court physician to the last Emperor, and had inherited a body of knowledge and practice which survived China's political and cultural changes. Dr. Wang and Dr. Chen were studying an herbal preparation for prostate cancer called PC-SPES. She had found that it restrained certain mutant genes in prostate-tumor cells and so hastened the death of these otherwise long-lived cells. The preparation contained substances that mimicked certain human hormones, but it also had high levels of compounds resembling genistein—a chemical that appears to inhibit several cancer-promoting enzymes. Dr. Fair then told her about his own situation, asking if she was aware of any active herbal therapies that might be assessed against his colon cancer. She put him in contact with Dr. Wang.

"Dr. Wang asked me if my cancer had a p53 mutation," Dr. Fair recounts. Then Wang provided him with the parent preparation, SPES, which he believed was worth screening against tumors that had this signature aberration. Fair says he was skeptical: "When you look at some of the claims of these herbal potions, they are said to do everything for everyone." But he knew he had nothing to lose, and he was impressed by Dr. Chen's scientific rigor, so he decided to test it out.

Dr. Heston added a water extract of SPES to the regular diet of the immune-deficient mice carrying Dr. Fair's colon cancer. Other tumor-bearing mice were fed the regular diet as controls. Within a few weeks, the tumors in the SPES-fed mice had shrunk by fifty per cent, while the tumors in the control mice had continued to grow. When Dr. Fair learned of the results, in September of last year, he started taking large quantities of the herb. The only side effect he experienced was diarrhea, and he adjusted his dose until it was tolerable. Twelve months later, he is still taking SPES every day.

THE idea of a vaccine against cancer may not have the ancient lineage of the Chinese apothecary, but, however futuristic it sounds, it has been sought for more than a century. In fact, when John D. Rockefeller, Jr., began supporting what is now Memorial Sloan-Kettering about a century ago, it was in part to pursue such a vaccine. In the simplest terms, a vaccine primes your immune system to detect a particular foreign protein and thereby target the microbial intruder with which that protein is associated. But cancers, too, are marked by foreign proteins—proteins produced by the cancer's mutant genes. The puzzling thing is that the body doesn't dependably recognize those cells as aberrant and destroy them with killer T cells. Somehow, successful cancers manage to sidestep or short-circuit that response, so that immunity never develops. An effective tumor vaccine would train the body's killer T cells to recognize the cancer and purge it in the routine way that they purge germs.

One scientist who has had some success in creating a first-generation tumor vaccine is Dr. Ronald Levy, of Stanford. He has long pursued the idea of customized cancer therapy, and understands the scientific and social complexities of the quest. A specialist in lymphoma—a cancer of a class of white cells found within the lymph nodes and the spleen—Dr. Levy recognized that the tumor of every lymphoma patient had a unique signature protein, called an idiotypic immunoglobulin. If a person's immune system could be trained to scent out this protein, his body's own armamentarium could be directed against the disease.

"He had one foot in the grave," Dr. Levy recalls of the first patient he treated in his program, some seventeen years ago. The lymphoma had grown

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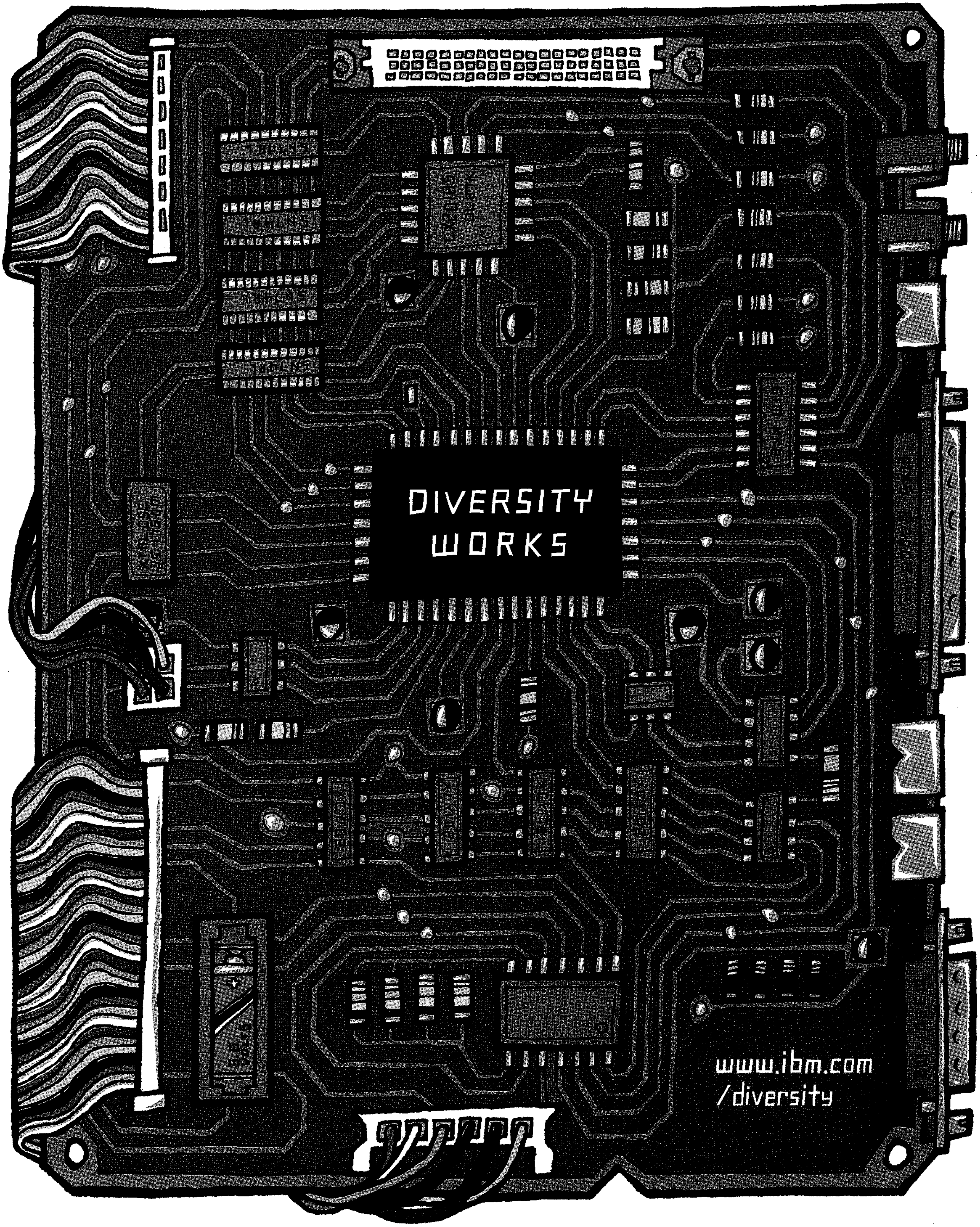
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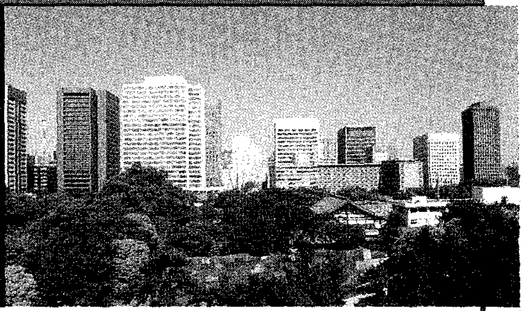
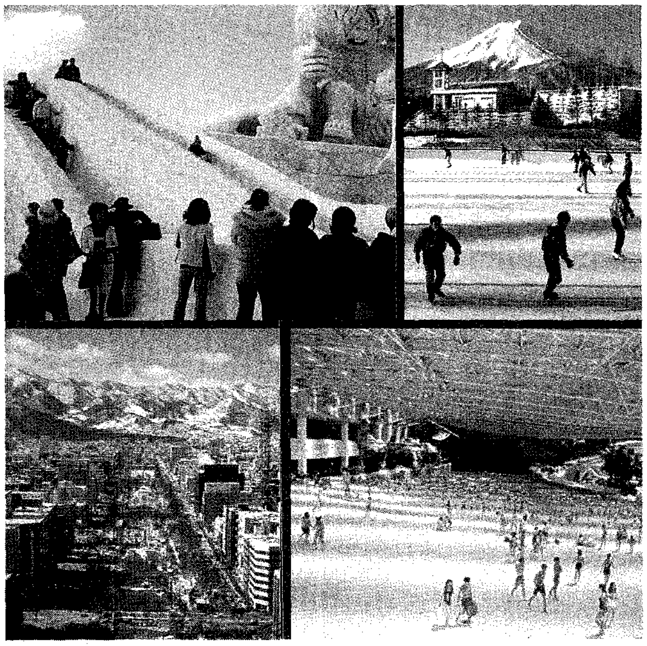
JAPAN GATEWAY TO ASIA



As with few other destinations, Japan has always held a certain mystique for Americans. Perhaps it is because its culture, not unlike our own, respects the past yet embraces the future. Even today, Japan is defined as a society that adheres to centuries-old customs and traditions while developing technology that moves its nation forward with the speed of a microchip. Japan is a study in contrasts, and therein lies its attraction and allure.

As the sun rises each morning to greet the four islands that comprise Japan–Hokkaido, Honshu, Shihoku and Kyushu–visitors are met with an embarrassment of riches in things to do and places to see. From world-class hiking and alpine skiing to meditation or sauntering along pristine shorelines, Japan has something to suit every sensibility. Nature lovers can bask in the lush forests of Kyoto, where a tour of ancient temples is a must. While urban adventurers will want to partake of Tokyo's throbbing nightlife and the theatrical art of Kabuki. If one is inclined to do both, even in the same day, a high-speed train between the two cities makes it possible–a two-and-a-half hour one-way trip that costs less than a hundred dollars.



Photos: top, Tokyo's Civic Center; center (clockwise l. to r.) Sapporo Snow Festival, Fujikyu Highland Theme Park, Yokohama's "Wild Blue" indoor beach resort, and an aerial view of Sapporo City. © JNTO

Comfort is central to the Japanese aesthetic. Service is always personal and gracious, whether one stays in a rustic country *ryokan* (inn), or in one of Tokyo's towering first class hotels. Expect to dine well in any of the city's Japanese restaurants, from fresh sushi and sashimi artfully prepared, to *shabu-shabu* and *robata-yaki* cooked at one's table. Or experience a traditional Japanese dinner at a *kaiseki-ryori* restaurant, a veritable gastronomic sampling of Japan's culinary heritage.

First-time travelers to Tokyo will be taken with the city's profusion of parks and flower-filled gardens, some of which contain Shinto shrines, said to house the spirit of Japan. The shrines provide a sense of serenity to the city.

Throughout Tokyo's eight-hundred square miles, a sophisticated system of trains, subways, and monorails provide economical transportation. A quick ride on Tokyo's Marunouchi subway line leads to the popular Ginza district replete with Western and European design boutiques. Trains also allow easy access to the Shinjuku and Shibuya districts, where huge department stores dominate.

Japan offers some of the more offbeat and unusual attractions year-round, such as "Wild Blue" in Yokohama, an indoor beach resort, complete with wide sandy beach and rippling aqua blue water. For those with a passion for shussing the slopes even in summer, there is the Lalaport indoor Ski Dome just outside Tokyo. Families will love the attractions and indoor ice-skating rink at Sega Corporation's Fujikyu Highland Theme Park. Another highlight is the annual Sapporo Snow Festival, an international team competition of massive snow and ice sculpting held from February 5th to the 11th.

For those interested in touring Japan, getting there has never been more comfortable or convenient. Continental Airlines is offering new daily non-stop service to Tokyo from Newark International Airport. Beginning next January, Continental will offer the same daily non-stop service to Tokyo from Houston. The airline already provides Honolulu to Tokyo flights. All Tokyo flights may be booked through Continental's toll free number, **1-800-525-0280** or its website at **www.flycontinental.com.**

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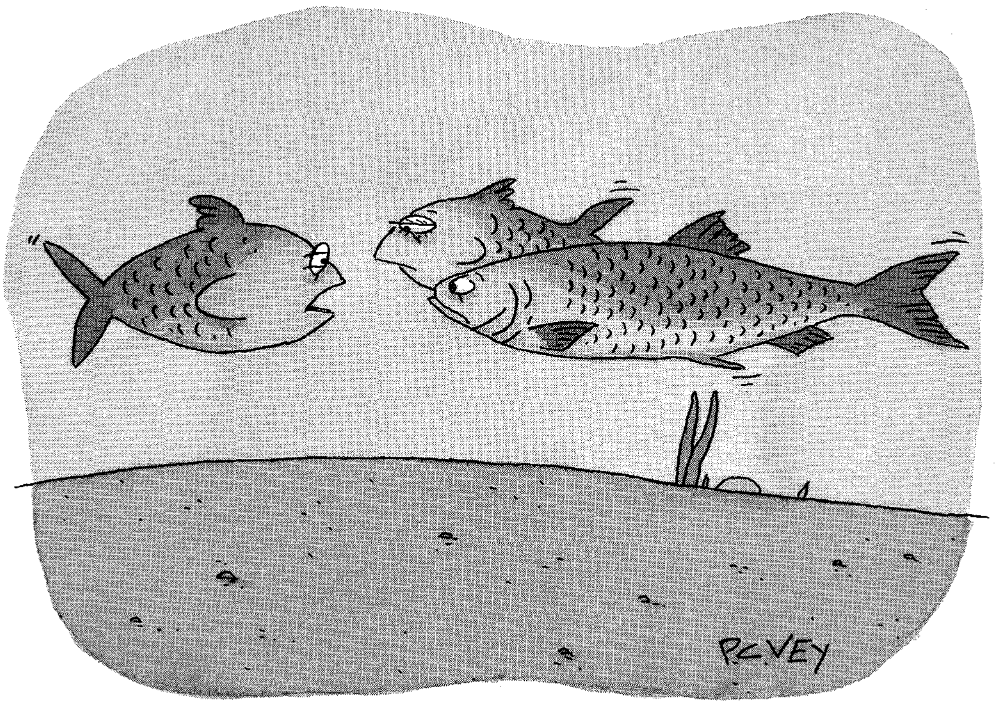


"You may be in love, but can you support my daughter on what a herring makes?"

into palpable masses, not only within internal organs but as nodules on the skin as well. Dr. Levy extracted the signature lymphoma protein from the cancerous tissue and injected it into mice; these mice produced antibodies against the protein. Now Levy determined which antibody was the most potent, produced it in quantity, and infused the substance into the dying patient. A near-miraculous regression of the lymphoma occurred. Within several months of treatment with the customized antibody, there was no evidence of any tumor.

This astounding result launched a major initiative in Dr. Levy's laboratory, which was conducted in partnership with a California biotechnology company, IDEC Pharmaceuticals, in 1986. Of fifty patients who received the customized treatment—typically, over a six-week period—about seventy-five per cent saw significant shrinkage of their tumors which lasted for nearly a year: six patients in the group with advanced lymphoma have remained in complete clinical remission, with no tumor detectable by CAT scans or physical examination, for up to ten years. Using newly available diagnostic techniques, Dr. Levy has found evidence of minute numbers of circulating lymphoma cells among those patients in long-term remission; what appears to keep their cancers at bay is the immune response triggered by the initial antibody therapy. Unfortunately, the cost of producing the customized therapy was too great for the approach to be commercially viable. "It was good medicine, but not good business," Dr. William Rastetter, IDEC's C.E.O., explained to me recently.

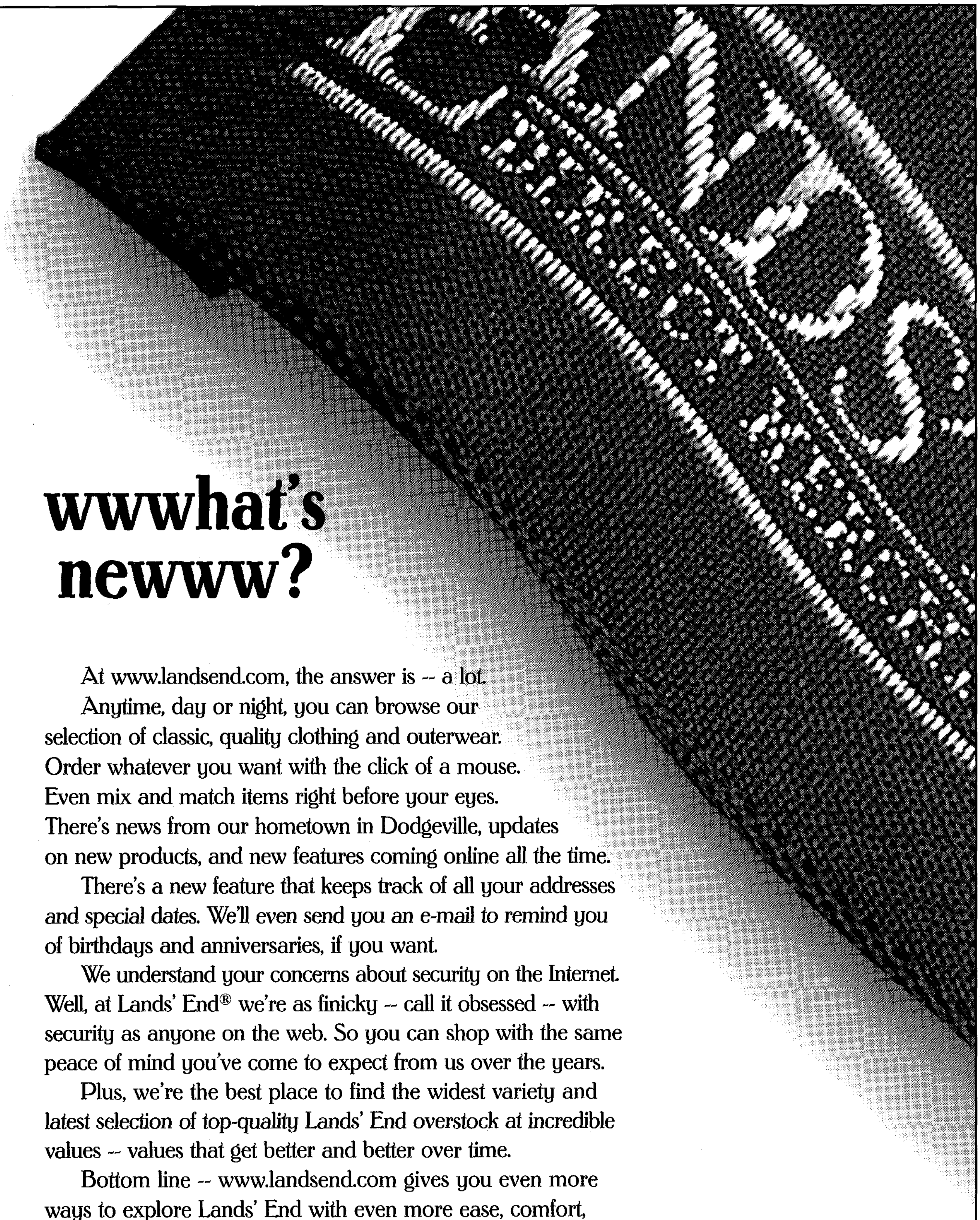
But even though Dr. Levy's antibody approach was not practicable, a proof of principle had been achieved. He had evidence that the immune system could be directed to recognize a protein unique to a tumor and cause the regression of an otherwise incurable disease. So in the early nineties the Stanford team turned to tumor vaccines, attempting to get the cancer patients to produce antibodies of the sort the mice had produced. It's a simpler technique, but one that Levy has shown to be clinically effective.

Levy's current approach is to take a lymphoma patient's idiotypic immunoglobulin, the cancer's signature protein, and create a vaccine from it. One of his procedures is to mix it with a sample of the patient's own white blood cells, which modify the tumor protein to a form that sparks an especially potent immune response. As of July of this year, ten patients with widespread cancer have been vaccinated by this procedure, and the tumors of four of them have shrunk significantly; in fact, three have seen their disease disappear completely. No significant side effects have arisen from the treatment.

William Fair, like other cancer specialists, is keenly interested in Levy's successes, but he knows that different kinds of tumors appear more or less susceptible to containment by the immune system. Lymphoma may be particularly sensitive to the attack of antibodies and killer T cells. Yet the challenge has made researchers all the more intent on trying to mobilize the immune system against currently intractable cancers, like colon cancer. So when Dr. Fair turned to a longtime friend and former Sloan-Kettering researcher, Dr. Eli Gilboa, for help in creating a customized tumor vaccine, Gilboa responded with alacrity, for scientific as well as for personal reasons.

Dr. Gilboa, who by that time was at Duke, is an internationally acclaimed biologist, who bridges the worlds of cancer genetics and clinical therapy. His laboratory at Duke was already testing a generic form of a tumor vaccine for different types of incurable bowel cancer. Uncertain which signature protein on Dr. Fair's colon cancer might spark the most effective immune response, Dr. Gilboa spent the early part of this year working with the incubated cell lines that Skip Heston had prepared, and he created a vaccine that presented the full range of mutated proteins in William Fair's tumor. His laboratory assessed that vaccine by simulating its effects on Dr. Fair's immune system in a test-tube setting. It triggered large numbers of killer T cells from Dr. Fair's blood, which, when mixed with his colon-cancer cells, destroyed them.

This individualized vaccine could be administered only with F.D.A. approval. Dr. Kim Lyerly, the clinician working with Dr. Gilboa at Duke, submitted a protocol for the single patient, Dr. William Fair. The F.D.A. often permits a single course of therapy for a single patient under so-called compassionate protocols, and it did so



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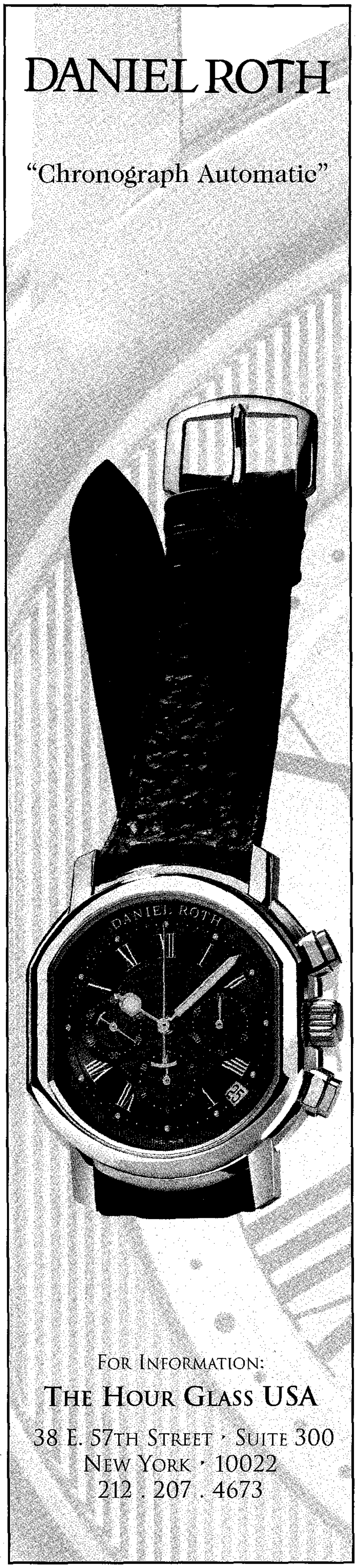

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in this case. In a laboratory refrigerator at Duke, there is a vaccine with Dr. Fair's name on it, waiting for him.

DR. FAIR knows that as a patient he has been extraordinarily privileged, because of his knowledge and his contacts. The pursuit of unconventional therapies customized to a particular tumor is not an option for most cancer patients. But he hopes that one day it will be. He ticks off the obstacles that must be surmounted: the preservation of viable tumor cells and their perpetuation in the laboratory; labor-intensive assays both in test tubes and in small animals, in order to screen compounds for activity against the growing tumor; and the considerable financial resources and intellectual commitment of research groups, like those at Sloan-Kettering and at Duke, in order to characterize the genes of the cancer and develop an individual approach.

None of these obstacles will give way easily. Some fifteen years ago, a company named Biotherapeutics was established to screen tumors against a battery of known drugs and immune therapies and try to select treatment accordingly. It failed, not for any lack of paying customers but because its results were disappointing. At that time, the knowledge and technology were wanting, and the arsenal of available therapies was meagre: much less was known about genetic mutations that promote cancer, and the assays of therapies against tumor cells growing in a test tube were poor predictors of their clinical effect in the patient. Significant advances have been made since then, and even greater advances should be made in the decades ahead. There will be improvements in laboratory assessment of treatments, yielding ever swifter and more accurate results. Using automated techniques, microchips should provide a readout of genetic sequences and mutations within minutes. And "rational design" of new drugs and vaccines against tumor proteins will be sped along by models of the three-dimensional structure of these proteins, which can be generated by high-performance computers. But though foreseeable developments in technology will accelerate the process, it will remain intensive and costly. "People pay to have their sperm banked," Dr. Fair observes. "The affluent may someday pay to have their tumors banked and analyzed at the time of diagnosis."

That scenario will become likely if there are clinical successes from the use of harvested tumor tissue as the template for novel drugs or vaccines. And even now, preceding any such success, very wealthy cancer patients might well decide to fund such enterprises. But could such attempts, if they proved effective, remain a prerogative solely of the rich? It's hard to imagine it: the public outcry would be too intense. Yet how would the F.D.A. regulate the widespread use of lab-bench remedies? And how would insurers adapt, particularly in a country that already carries inordinately high health-care costs?

Dr. Fair is content to let others wrestle with such questions. A CAT scan done at the end of July, of this year, some eleven months after William Fair began taking SPES, showed that the cancer had shrunk and there were no new deposits anywhere. He is pleased about the news, of course, but is far from complacent. He knows that until the components of SPES are identified and tested against other colon cancers with p53 mutations he cannot conclude cause and effect in his case. It is still no more than an anecdote. But it's an impressive anecdote, all the same: the expected course of his disease is relentless growth, and, given the rapidity with which his cancer had recurred previously, his results are distinctly unusual. Dr. Fair says that he has decided to "get as much mileage out of the herbal and alternative therapies as possible" and that he is prepared to pursue his second customized therapy, a tumor vaccine, if the cancer begins to grow. He recalls the darkest days of his treatment, when the mass beneath his liver was discovered and he first learned that the odds of his survival had dropped precipitately. "The thought of analyzing my own cancer crossed my mind, but, frankly, I was more concerned about life and death," Dr. Fair says, sounding a little baffled by his slowness. Then he brightens. "When it was suggested to me, of course, I realized it was a fantastic idea." ♦

(*This is the second of two reports from the cancer wars.*)

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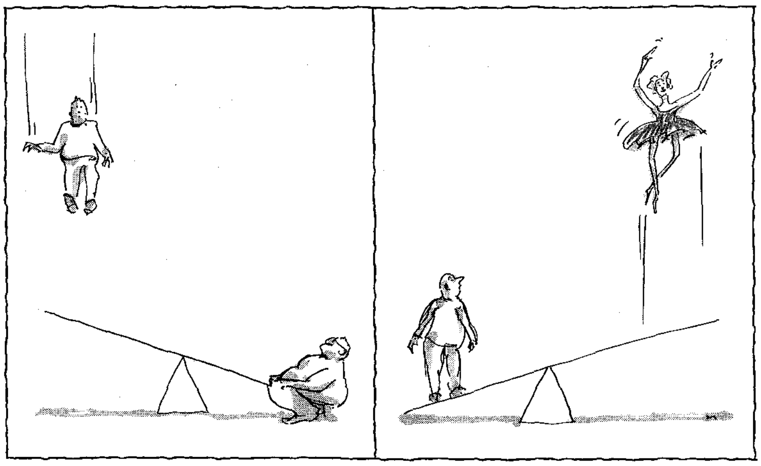
SHOUTS & MURMURS

STUDIES IN THE NEW CAUSALITY

BY STEVE MARTIN

> A 27-year-old Michigan man, who complained that a rear-end auto collision had turned him into a homosexual, has been awarded $200,000 by a jury.
>
> —*"Ann Landers," July 30, 1998.*

Recent discoveries in the legal profession have left scientists, many of whom still linger romantically in the Newtonian world, scrambling to catch up in the field of New Causality. In a case last month, a judge in Sacramento ruled in favor of changing the value of pi, thus acquitting a tire manufacturer of making tires that were not fully round. An appeal by scientists was thrown out for lack of evidence when the small courtroom could not physically accommodate a fully expressed representation of pi. The oblong tires in question were produced at the retrial, the judge said they looked round to him, the defense played the race card, and the value of pi was changed to 2.9.


MICHAEL CRAWFORD

Cause and effect have traditionally been expressed by the example of one billiard ball hitting another billiard ball, the striking billiard ball being the "cause" and the struck billiard ball being the "effect." However, in the new legal parlance the cause of the second billiard ball's motion is unclear, depending on whether you're prosecuting or defending the first billiard ball. If you are suing the first billiard ball, it is entirely conceivable that striking the second billiard ball harmed your chances of becoming Miss Paraguay. If you're defending the first billiard ball, the motion of the second billiard ball could be an unrelated coincidence.

It's easy to understand how one physical thing can influence another physical thing: my car hit your car because I was blinded by your shiny hair barrette. But what about emotional causality? Can my harsh words affect your mood, costing you millions of dollars that you would have earned behind the counter at Burger King? Apparently so. Several months ago, a male office worker was awarded sixty-seven thousand dollars because a female co-worker asked him if he would like her to drop his "package" off at the post office; he was further awarded fifty thousand dollars after arguing that she was also in constant possession of a vagina, the knowledge of which rendered him unable to concentrate.

A more difficult causality to prove, however, is physical to emotional. Can being struck from behind in a car accident cause someone to become a homosexual? Obviously the answer is yes, evidenced by the large award in the lawsuit cited above. Even more interesting is a little-known case in which a man was awarded thirty-six thousand dollars after a driver *failed* to collide with his car, causing him to become a *latent* homosexual.

The New Causality guidelines have redefined many of the basic concepts with which the scientific world has struggled for centuries. They are:

The "Ninety-seven Steps" Rule: It used to be accepted that one event caused another one event to happen. No longer so. It is now acceptable to have up to ninety-seven causality links: *Your dog ate my philodendron which depressed my mother who in a stupor voted for Marion Barry causing an upswing in crack sales that allowed Peru to maintain an embassy and accumulate parking tickets, encouraging me to stay a meter maid rather than become an Imagineer.* And so on.

Semantic Causality: Semantic causality occurs when a word or phrase in the cause is the same as a word or phrase in the effect. "You failed to install my client's *sink* properly, causing her to *sink* into a depression." In the case cited earlier, the plaintiff's lawyer might say that the "party" driving the Camaro collided with his client's car, and isn't a "party" where homosexuals gather and socialize with one another?

After-the-Fact Causality: This simple law states that having sex with an intern can cause a financial misdealing to occur twenty years prior.

Universal Causality: This is the law that has the legal world most excited. It rests on the proposition that "anything can cause anything," or, more simply put, the "Bill Gates gave my dog asthma" principle. If the law of Universal Causality bears out, the economy will receive an invigorating boost when everyone sues everyone else for everything. Everything actionable that ever happened to you will be the fault of your next-door neighbor, who, in turn, will sue Bill Gates, who, in turn, will sue himself.

These advancements in the legal world mean for science that a large stellar object is no longer the *cause* of the bending of light rays that pass nearby but its *blame*. Scientists everywhere are scurrying to make sense of the New Causality, with Newtonians turning into Einsteinians, and Einsteinians turning into Cochranians. Meanwhile, astronomers have discovered new and distant objects in the farthest reaches of the universe. Are they protogalaxies forming near the beginning of time? The courts will decide. ♦

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PROFILE

ROLL OVER, BEETHOVEN

The mercurial young English composer Thomas Adès amazes and confounds the music world.

BY ALEX ROSS

THE composer Thomas Adès and I were standing outside Symphony Hall in Birmingham, England, one afternoon this summer, when Adès shook his head and said, "Oh, she *is* terrible, isn't she?" The woman in question was Alma Mahler, the famously seductive widow of Gustav Mahler, whose Second Symphony was about to share a bill with Adès's new orchestral piece, "Asyla," at a City of Birmingham Symphony concert. It doesn't matter how we got on this subject or why Adès disliked a woman who died before he was born: he is always brimming with opinions. What struck me was his use of the present tense. He was talking as if Alma Mahler were still alive. He leaned over conspiratorially—he's a tall, bulky fellow, with a tubalike voice—and his eyes darted mischievously to one side. I had the curious impression that Alma and Gustav Mahler were standing over by the sandwich counter. When I asked Adès how he felt having his music played next to Mahler's, he put his hand over his mouth in mock horror, as though he were afraid of offending his hundred-and-thirty-eight-year-old colleague.

The news that classical music is a dead or dying art hasn't reached Adès.

JOSH GOSFIELD

"Well, I've had my things played next to his several times," he said, with another sidelong glance. "I've been paired with the Mahler Third, the Mahler Fifth, the Mahler Eighth. This one, the Second"—he lowered his voice. "Have you noticed that it's quite insanely loud?" He arched his eyebrows expectantly, as if challenging me to find this description of Mahler's heaven-storming "Resurrection" Symphony in some way insufficient. I laughed the all-purpose, clueless laugh of the American abroad, and we headed for the sandwich display, from which Gustav and Alma had politely disappeared.

Thomas Adès is twenty-seven. His confidence is, at first, unnerving. Mahler is not the giant in whose shadow he labors; he's the guy who wrote the symphony coming next. Adès's self-assurance might easily be mistaken for the bravado of a young man who has had too rapid a success. He has outgrown

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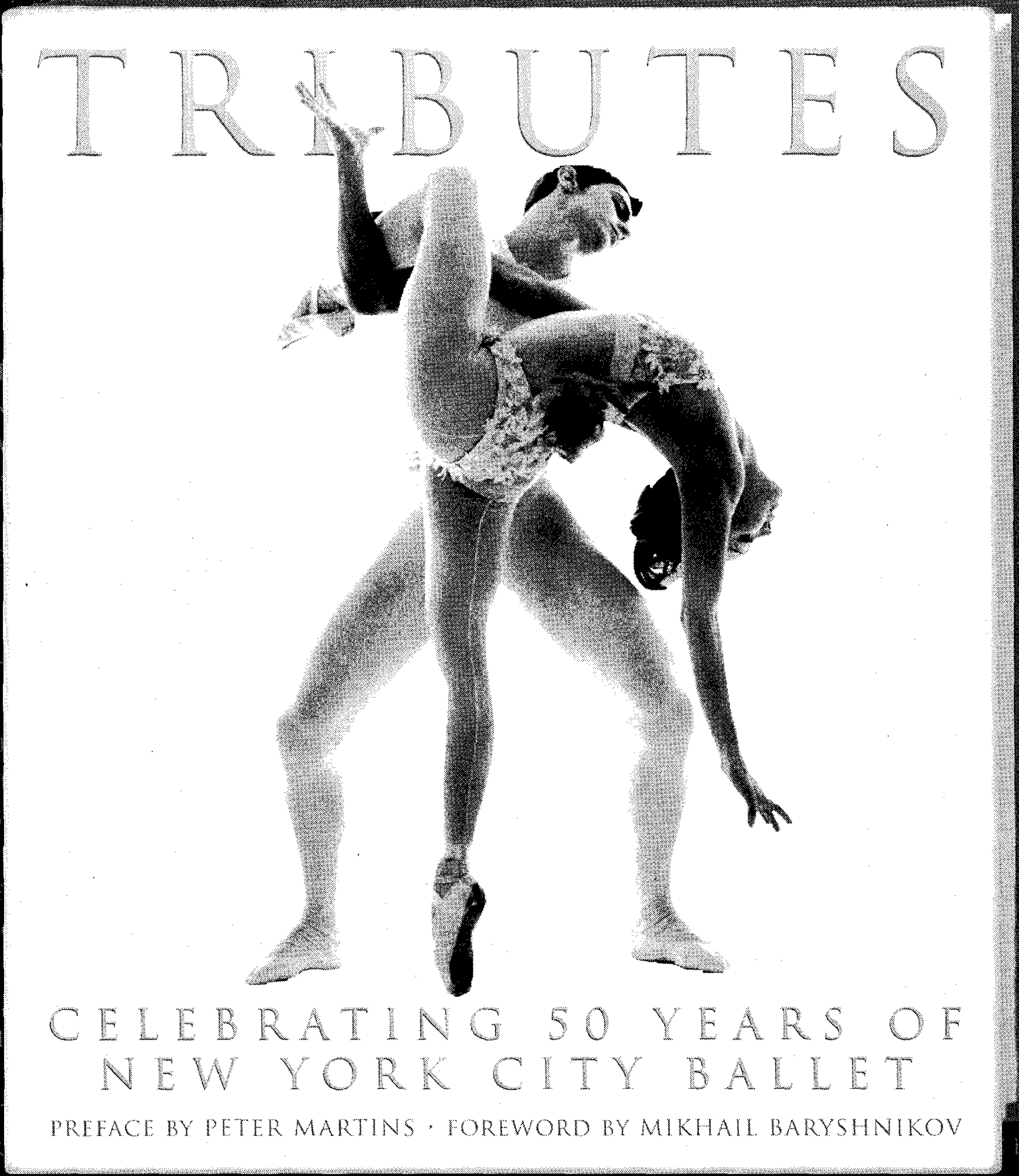
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PREFACE BY PETER MARTINS · FOREWORD BY MIKHAIL BARYSHNIKOV

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his status as the wunderkind of a vibrant British scene and become one of the most imposing figures in contemporary classical music. His works now go around the world almost before they are published: his first opera, the blistering comedy "Powder Her Face," has been heard in England, Germany, Australia, California, and Colorado, and it will be performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in December. In addition, Adès is an uncommonly sensitive pianist and has a knack for conducting. Some people think it's all a bit much. "He's a monster," one disenchanted observer said to me.

HE'S not, and that may be the most maddening thing. Adès is not misanthropic, unwashed, or unhinged, as contemporary classical composers sometimes are. He may seem, on first encounter, guarded, intellectual, a bit suspicious. But he has a sweet, exuberant side: he explodes in laughter at nothing in particular, does impersonations of his outrageous literary friends, shows a working knowledge of pop culture, tries out Wildean paradoxes. (Example: "I must remember to smoke more often.") He occasionally ventures from his flat, near Hampstead, into the wilds of nighttime London, dancing to his favorite Pulp songs with polyrhythmic gesticulations. (I know this because I ran into him one night in a place called Popstarz.) The news that classical music is a dead or dying art hasn't reached him. He assumes that his audience is both large and sophisticated: he doesn't traffic either in the antagonistic complexities of modernism, which think nothing of the audience, or in the pandering simplicities of postmodernism, which think of nothing but. His music is at once complex and direct. It is so good that his confidence comes off as matter-of-fact.

Granted, Adès has got into trouble for insolence. "PRODIGY WITH A NOTABLE TALENT FOR SOUNDING OFF" was the headline over an early account of him in the English press. The writer, keeping his options open, said that Adès was either "the new Mozart" or "the biggest piece of arrogance and pretension to hit British culture since Damien Hirst pickled his first fish." The problem wasn't simply that Adès had fallen

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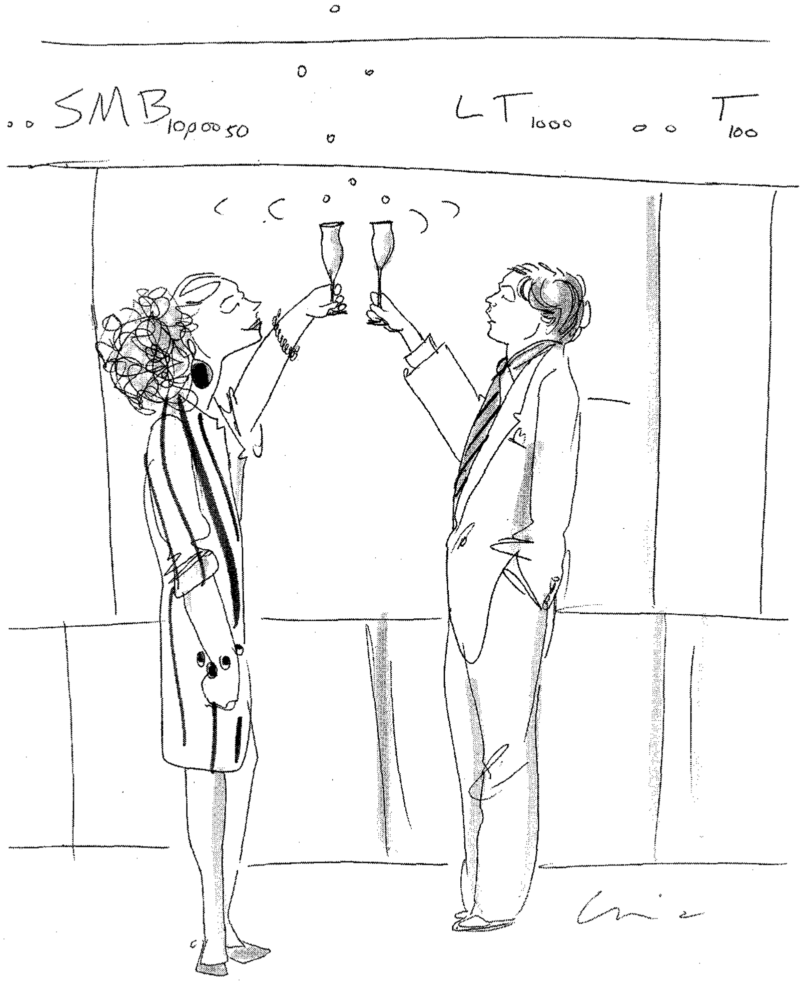

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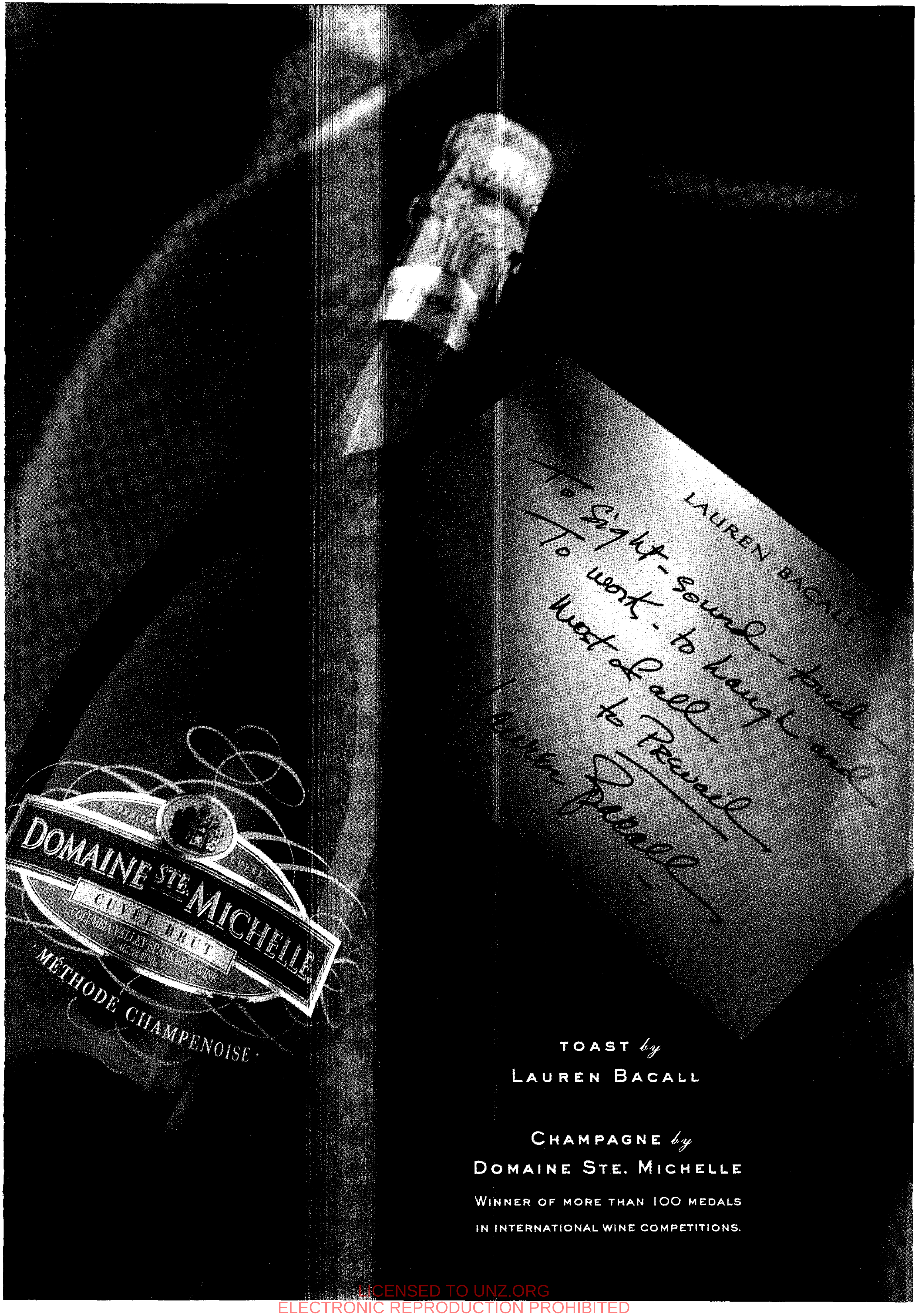

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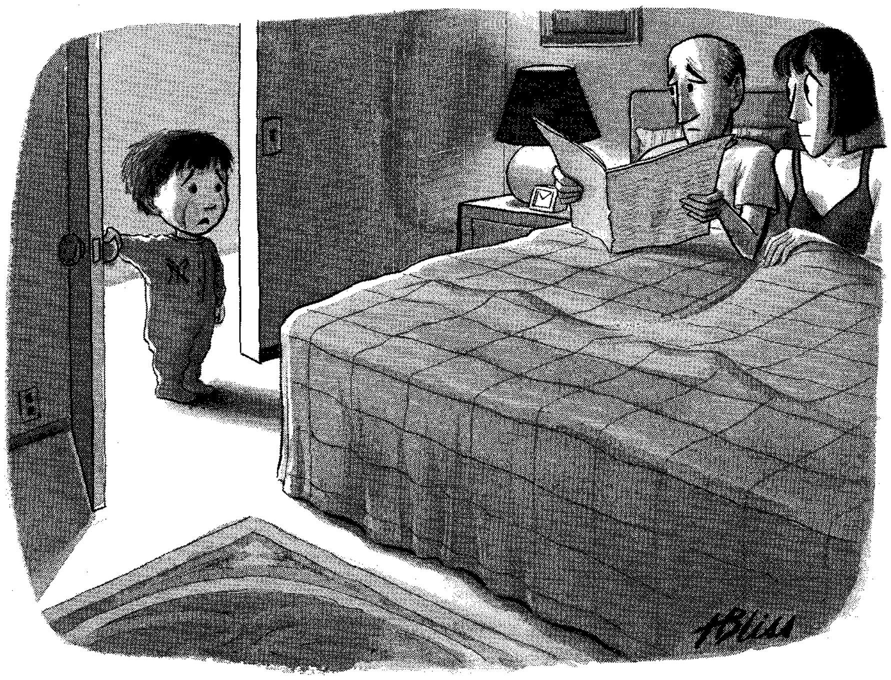
victim to the obsessive cattiness of English criticism; he had, in fact, made several questionable statements. He said that Benjamin Britten was not a major twentieth-century opera composer. He described Shostakovich's solemn Eighth Quartet as "a terrible con," and compared the minimalist religious music of John Tavener to "dog psychiatry—utterly bogus." He has learned to rein in remarks of this sort. It's too bad, in a way, because Adès's disdain for received opinion is one of the vital signs of his mind. For him, the great composers are not distant idols but noisy neighbors, and he has his ups and downs with them. Lately, he's been quarrelling with Brahms. "Oh, I used to like him," he mused on the train back to London. "I used to go to bed whistling the Clarinet Trio, just like the next person. Then, one day, I woke up and said to myself, 'It won't do! No, it won't do at all! He's wretched, he's tedious, his finales are dutiful and are there only for the sake of appearances.'" The tirade became more elaborate as I—a confessed Brahms lover—grew visibly more crestfallen. Brahms also had committed the sin of declaring that the greatest music had already been written. "No one has the final word," Adès said, looking out the window at the neat, bleak villages of the Midlands. "No one exhausts the possibilities." He recently returned to this theme, by E-mail: "Nabokov, in 'The Gift,' pictures someone who claims there are no mountains left to climb—only to look up and see a tweedy Englishman waving cheerfully from a higher peak."

This sly and amusing person is, improbably, one of the most original composers of our time. Originality is not a fashionable word; in the dogma of postmodernism, such a thing is no longer possible. Composers, in particular, are haunted by a sense that everything has already been said. By 1971, the year Adès was born, all avenues of avant-garde abstraction had been explored, and contemporary music had begun to retreat into murky, depressed eclecticism. Although Adès is himself an eclectic, he refuses to acknowledge the primacy of the past: he doesn't leave ironic quotation marks hanging in the air. He often begins with something more like noise than like music: rustlings, growlings, high-pitched cries, unearthly basement tones. It's like a scouring of the musical canvas that previous composers have left for him to use. Then he starts tracing motifs and patterns, sometimes building up complex arrays of activity and sometimes drawing out a brief glimpse of an idea into a spacious vista. "Asyla" is a piece in four movements which passes through violently contrasted symphonic episodes while pursuing a single potent figure.



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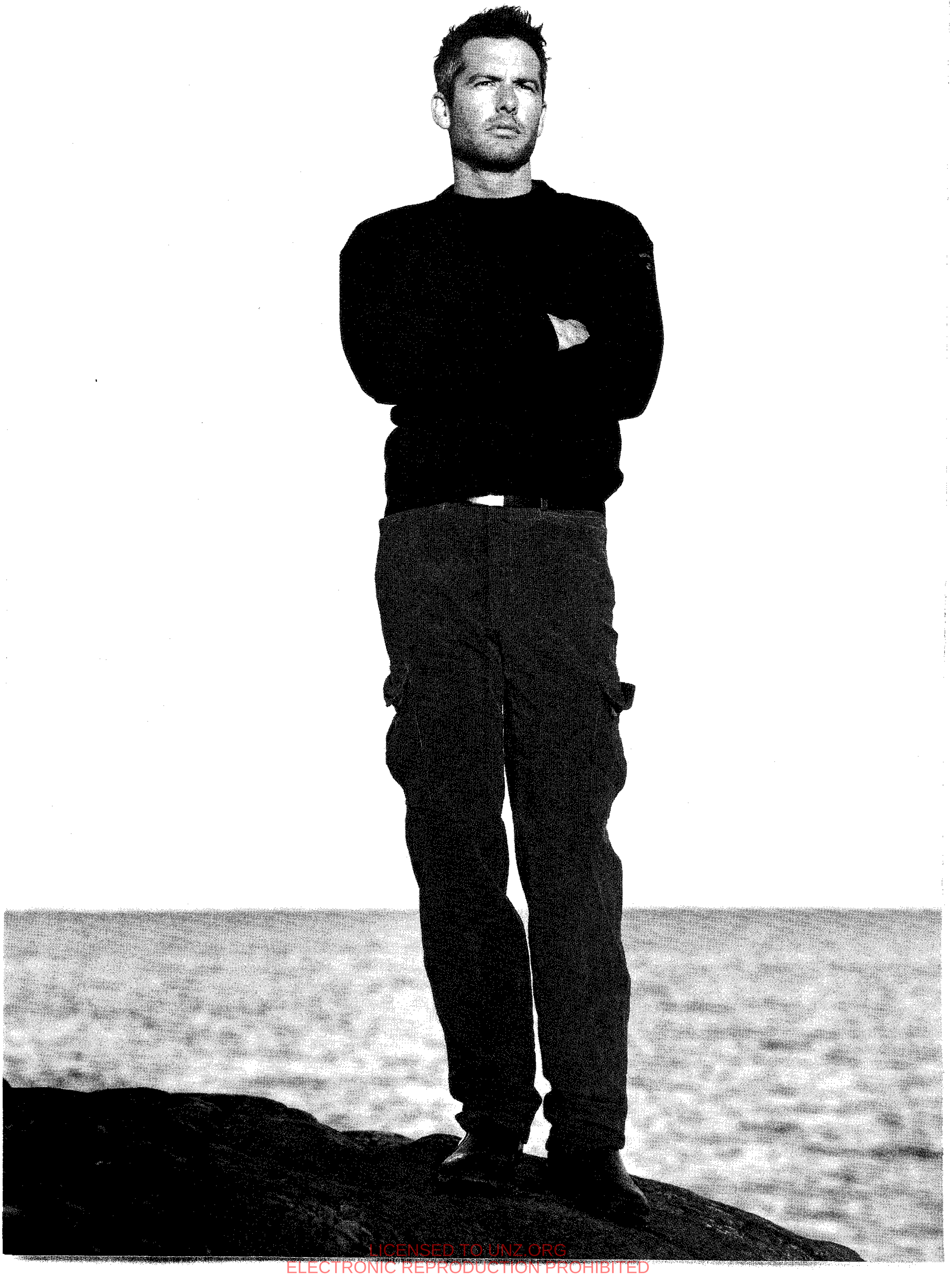

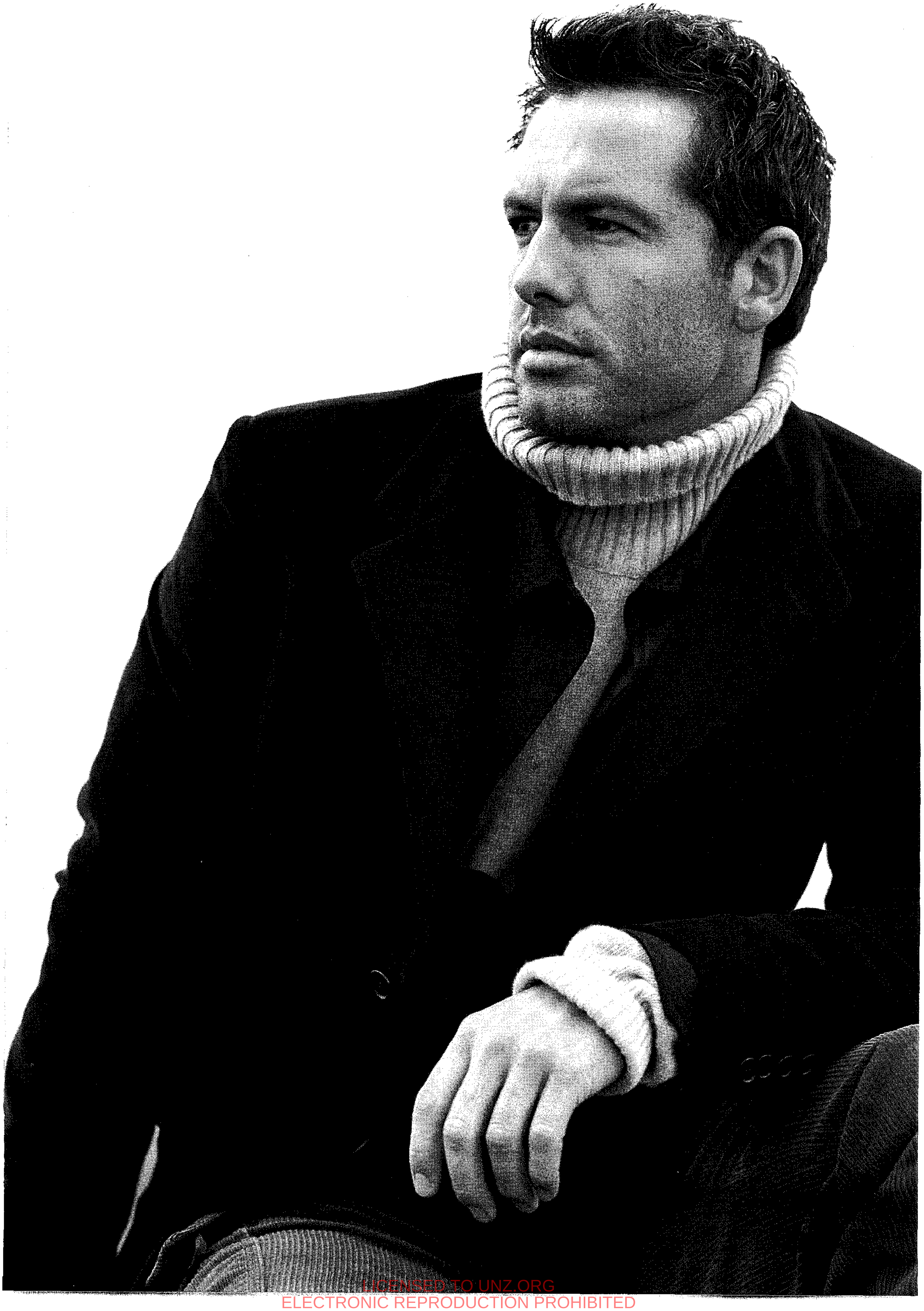

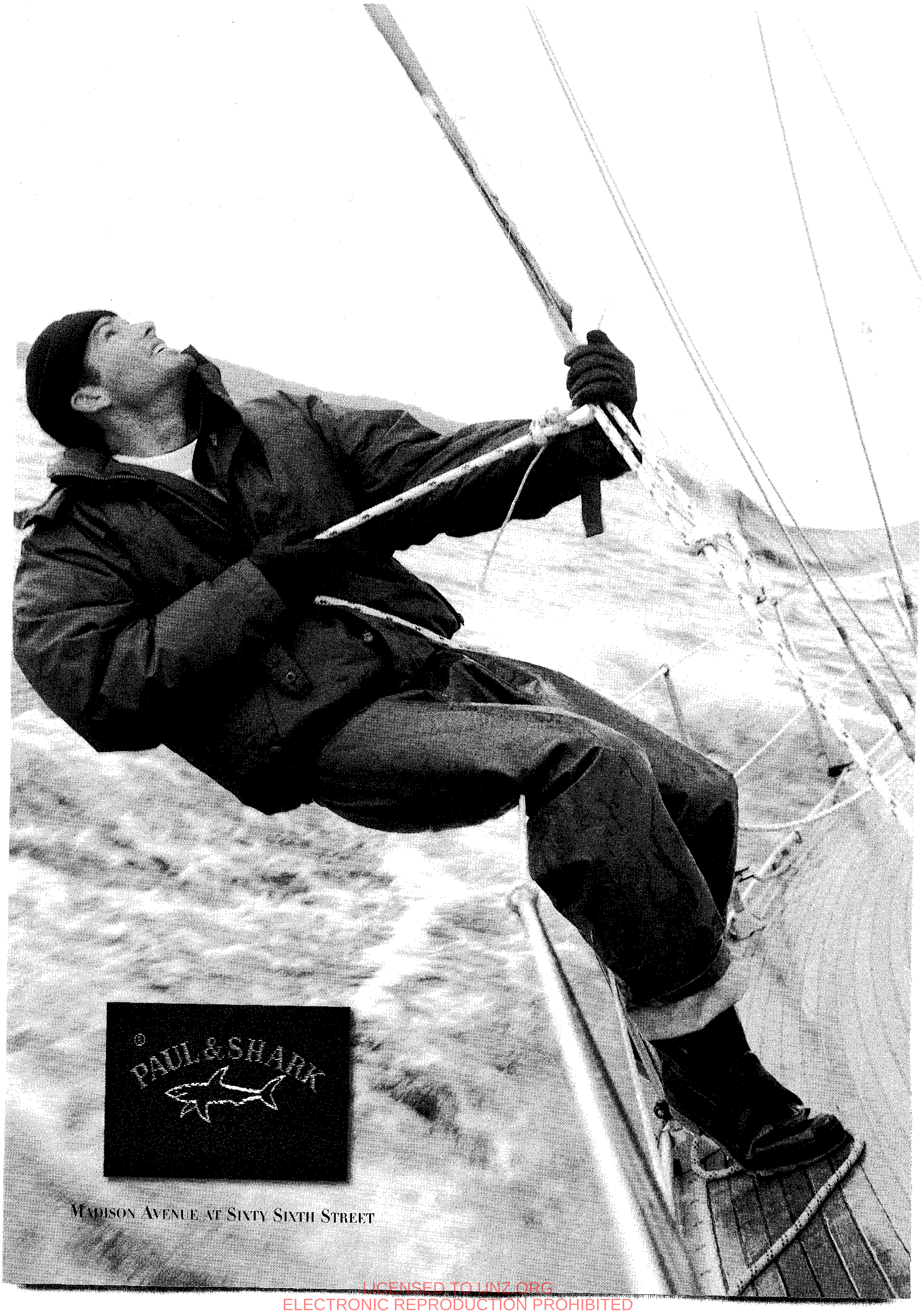
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What surprised me at the performance in Birmingham was the reaction I had to the Mahler symphony that followed. This was Simon Rattle's farewell concert, after a brilliant eighteen-year reign as the director of Birmingham's formerly provincial and now world-class orchestra. The power of the performance lived up to the occasion. But the Mahler, for all its magnificence, sounded—well, loud. "Asyla," too, had its moments of "insane loudness," but they were terse, abrupt, haunting. If Adès hadn't bettered Mahler, he had certainly challenged him. This was Rattle's doing: the program was a contest between two distinct personalities, the brazen Mahler and the byzantine Adès. I came away in awe of the whole scene—the composer, the conductor, the musical world out of which they had grown. I came away with a severe case of envy of English music.

ENVY, perhaps, is too strong a word, but anyone who has put up with the chief frustration of classical concert-going in America—the sense of being shut out of the mainstream culture—has to feel a twinge of jealousy upon visiting London. It's not that London has more or better concerts than New York; it's that musical events there are somehow marked by greater urgency. London's musical culture is less scattered, less incoherent; it all seems to happen in one arena. The audience for contemporary concerts overlaps the one that goes to early-music concerts, and elements of both show up at mainstream orchestral series—often because the programming takes note of their tastes. And in Britain a contemporary composer seems to have a bigger, brighter platform on which to speak. If you have a piece performed by Simon Rattle or at the summertime Proms in the Royal Albert Hall or on the BBC, everybody soon knows your name. In America, few composers operate on a national stage, and it takes a painfully long time for them to reach it. In Britain, a composer can gain attention almost overnight. That's what happened to Adès. He was first noticed in 1993, and by 1995 he was being celebrated with an opera première at the prestigious Cheltenham Festival, a Composer Portrait concert at the Aldeburgh Festival, and a performance at the

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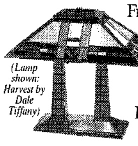

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BBC Proms. The same quick fame was won by Oliver Knussen in the seventies and by George Benjamin in the eighties. The cycle has some of the energy—and competitiveness—of televised sports.

The present bustle of British composing has been a long time coming. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the German-speaking countries produced most of the major figures in the classical repertory, and Britain produced none. Throughout the twentieth century, the country has run a patriotic race to catch up with the Continentals. The first British contestant for musical greatness was Edward Elgar; the second one, more convincing, was Benjamin Britten, who was the first English composer since Henry Purcell to put his stamp on all genres, including opera. With Britten's masterpiece "Peter Grimes," in 1945, the floodgates opened, and English composition acquired a worldliness and an intellectual heft that it hadn't possessed before the war. After Britten's breakthrough, a number of British composers acquired international reputations: Michael Tippett, Harrison Birtwistle, Peter Maxwell Davies. They substituted a tougher, thornier sound, in keeping with international trends, for the hill-and-dale tone-painting of Elgar, Delius, and Ralph Vaughan Williams. "It would be terrible to think of myself as an English composer," Adès said to me when I asked him about his relationship to his predecessors. Yet he did admit that the continuity of British traditions has boosted him: "Stravinsky made great efforts later in life not to be 'Russian,' but he wrote what he wrote by observing music from this very strong cultural balcony. Americans, I suppose, have the curious situation of having as their two greatest musical artists an insurance millionaire and a man who lived in a garage in Mexico." (He was referring to Charles Ives and Conlon Nancarrow. If you have never heard of Nancarrow, who wrote music for player pianos, there's the problem.)

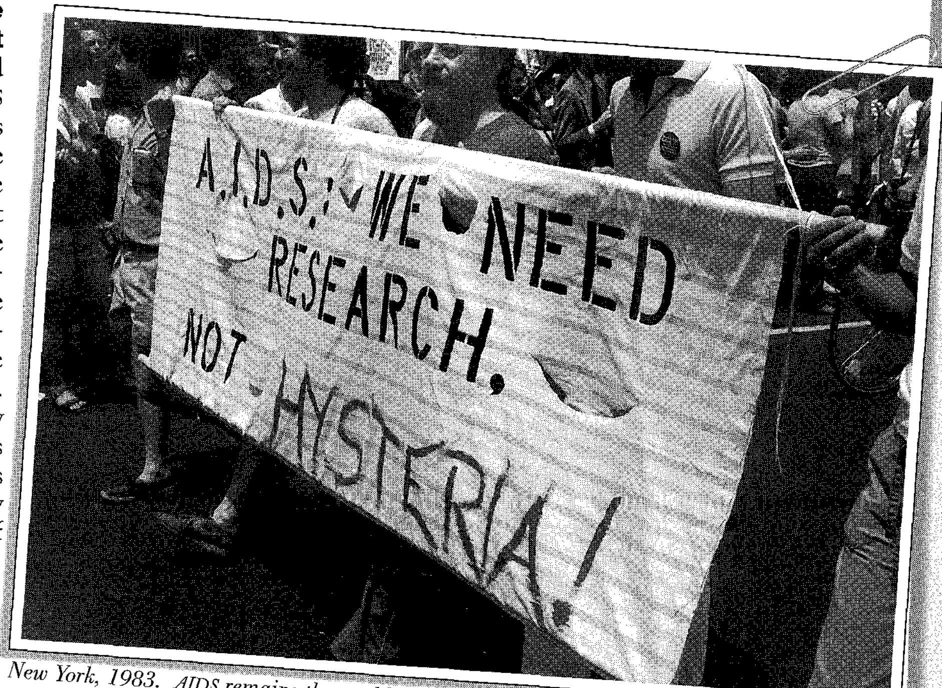
There are some other cultural forces at work in Britain. The basic elements of the classical vocabulary have wide circulation: they are still taught in schools and passed along in choral groups and Church of England sing-alongs. Hymnal chord changes show up all over in English pop music—in Britpop an-

Chasing the Cure

Living With HIV

by Jonathan L. Jacobs M.D.

At first there was nothing extraordinary about the young man who came to the New York Hospital emergency room with a worsening cough. Typical of the winter season, the waiting area was full of people with respiratory ailments on that chilly night in 1980. The doctors diagnosed pneumonia and were inclined to let the young man go home with oral antibiotics. They changed their minds and hospitalized him when blood tests showed he had a deficiency of circulating oxygen. Despite intravenous antibiotics, the patient's condition deteriorated steadily over the next few days. Within a week, he was so sick that the doctors had to insert a tube into his trachea for life support. They were shocked when a silver stain of his lung tissue revealed the presence of Pneumocystis carinii. Until then only a hundred cases of Pneumocystis pneumonia had been reported—always in weakened cancer patients treated with chemotherapy or very malnourished children in orphanages following World War II. The doctors were mystified by their patient's illness and his death a short time later. Their sense of mystery soon turned to alarm when another young man was admitted to the hospital with the same bizarre infection. After smoldering unrecognized in Africa for decades, the AIDS *epidemic had finally come to the attention of the world.*


A.I.D.S.: WE NEED RESEARCH, NOT HYSTERIA!

New York, 1983. AIDS *remains the world's greatest public health emergency.*

© Hank O'Neal

Twelve million deaths later, we have learned a great deal about AIDS. In 1983, Luc Montagnier and Robert Gallo discovered that AIDS was caused by a virus (HIV), and its modes of transmission were subsequently described. One of the epidemic's great tragedies is that although for the past fifteen years we have known how to prevent transmission, we have been unable to translate that knowledge into effective strategies. Globally, AIDS remains the greatest public health emergency. Sixteen thousand people are newly infected every day. Current estimates are that one percent of the world's population already has this potentially fatal infection. Ninety percent of these people live in countries where the resources devoted to medical care are so meager that they have no hope of treatment.

For patients in the United States and other developed countries, the outlook is somewhat brighter. Even before antiviral chemotherapy was developed, researchers from universities, clinics, and pharmaceutical companies had learned how to prevent some of the infectious complications of AIDS. Zidovudine (AZT), the first drug approved to treat HIV, was introduced in 1987. Although early studies suggested it could prolong life, the initial optimism gave way to heartbreaking disappointment as subsequent clinical experiments showed it had no effect on mortality.

Two critical developments in the 1990s offered new hope. Techniques were developed to directly measure HIV in the bloodstream, and scientists synthesized more powerful antiviral drugs called protease inhibitors. Investigators led by George Shaw at the University of Alabama and David Ho at New York's Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center precisely measured the antiviral response to drugs in infected volunteers. These observations were used to create mathematical models, which revealed that even while patients had no symptoms, the virus could make up to ten billion copies of itself every day. An organism reproducing so rapidly is likely to undergo frequent mutations, including some that confer resistance to AZT and other antiviral drugs. As a result, even if a drug is initially potent, it will soon become ineffective. It became clear that only the simultaneous use of multiple drugs could achieve a lasting effect.

Current practice is to prescribe three or more drugs to be taken concurrently to diminish the chance that resistance will occur. If drugs are added sequentially, or one of the drugs is not taken on schedule, a cascade of resistance may render all of the drugs useless. Unfortunately, even when the drugs are taken precisely on schedule, the virus can remain dormant in infected cells for years, and it retains its potential to replicate explosively. Patients entering the latent phase may feel remarkably better, but because of HIV's ability to remain dormant, it is not known whether they can ever stop their therapy. While a dramatic drop in hospitalization and mortality has resulted from the use of multiple-drug cocktails, the obstacles to successful therapy remain enormous. For all that we have learned, we cannot eradicate the virus. There is no cure.

© Charlie Pizzarello/Courtesy of GMHC

New Challenges: While the number of people living with HIV has risen, donations to AIDS service organizations have fallen off.

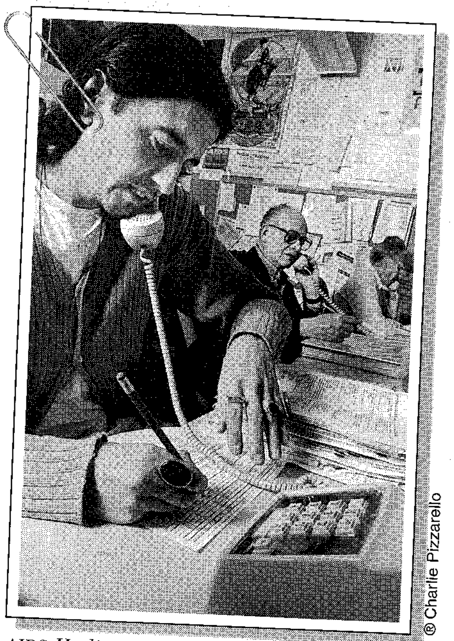
Under the best of circumstances then, patients must take as many as fifty pills a day so that their viral levels will remain adequately suppressed. Since resistance to one drug often predicts resistance to others, and multiple new drugs must be started simultaneously, the infected individual has few chances to get it right. That challenge is made more difficult by the many debilitating side effects and interactions associated with these powerful drugs. To complicate matters further, a drug-resistant virus can be transmitted to another person, potentially eliminating the recipient's chances of therapy.

The odds against successful treatment are increased by the psychosocial context of the AIDS epidemic in this country. Chasing the cure means that physicians must do more than simply prescribe drug regimens. Care providers must address other challenges that frequently include discrimination, poverty, mental illness, lack of insurance, substance abuse, and inadequate housing.

Even in the industrialized world, HIV is increasingly a disease of the poor. For many patients with this infection, the cost of prescriptions (typically ten to twenty-thousand dollars a year) is greater than their annual household income. Benefits such as Medicaid are lifelines for these patients, but such programs have bureaucratic obstacles that require literacy, persistence, organization, and patience to overcome. A homeless person is unlikely to sustain a complicated medical regimen unless housing is secured. Mental illness and substance abuse must be treated or antiviral therapy may be futile.

AIDS has focused the spotlight on the inadequacy of fragmented services for people with chronic diseases. It has also made an improvement in the delivery of services an urgent national priority. Coherent out-patient care is less expensive for society than the recurrent hospitalizations that result from lapses in therapy. Unfortunately, in the U.S., medical and social services are typically funded separately and provided by a patchwork of organizations.

Even before the advent of drug cocktails, innovative organizations such as the Shanti Project in San Francisco, and the AIDS Project Los Angeles, were addressing the medical and psychosocial needs of people infected with HIV. A multidisciplinary model for health care was pioneered at San Francisco General Hospital. New York State, with the largest number of cases in the country, created a model network of Designated AIDS Centers.



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AIDS Hotline: The earliest support system.

New York's Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), with the slogan "First in the fight against AIDS," was founded in 1981 before the term AIDS was even coined. While GMHC receives some grant funding, its survival depends on donated money and labor. Now 6,600 volunteers strong, it has grown into the largest provider of HIV-related services in the world. It recently opened the David Geffen Center for HIV Prevention and Health Education to encourage people to learn of their HIV status as early as possible.

The Center for Special Studies of New York Presbyterian Hospital (CSS) was founded ten years ago by patients, volunteers, and health professionals dissatisfied with the existing clinical care for AIDS patients. Even though AIDS is an extremely complicated problem, patients are forced to rely on a constantly changing roster of trainees in understaffed clinics. Anything beyond the most basic medical services often necessitates a trip to another clinic with the hope that the two clinics will manage to communicate with one another. Care is further fragmented when the patient is admitted to a hospital and must rely on yet another group of providers.

GMHC and CSS have now joined in a collaboration to make services more comprehensive, efficient, and seamless. This is the first joint effort between a leading

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Reconstruction Program: Initiated by AID Atlanta and funded by Hoffmann-La Roche, it's helping AIDS *patients rebuild their lives.*

community-based organization and a top academic medical center, and it promises to serve as a national model. Patients will receive care not only from HIV physicians and nurses, but also from psychiatrists, social workers, nutritionists, home care experts, an occupational therapist, dermatologist, chaplain, and volunteer attorneys. CSS has two outpatient sites—one at GMHC—and a dedicated inpatient unit at New York Presbyterian Hospital. Care is delivered by the same team of senior staff whether the patient is in the hospital, at the office, or at home, and regardless of the patient's insurance status.

The GMHC/CSS partnership will serve as a laboratory to test which combination of services work best and are most cost-effective. The data generated will illustrate how to make funding streams from insurers and government more coherent, so that patients and their providers won't have to patch together a network of fragmented services. Insights gained will benefit those suffering from other chronic illnesses—such as heart disease, schizophrenia, and cancer.

Advances in therapy have increased the burden on community-based organizations. As mortality declines, more people are living with AIDS. But, disasterously, donations to AIDS service organizations have fallen off as the number of people living with the disease has risen.

As scientists, physicians, and pharmaceutical companies struggle to overcome the odds, the basic science advances that have occurred during AIDS research over the past eighteen years will result in improved therapies for many diseases. Chasing the cure for one disease means chasing the cure for many more.

(Jonathan Jacobs is the founder and medical director of the Center for Special Studies at New York Presbyterian Hospital.)

If you wish to become an AIDS volunteer, call GMHC at 800-AIDS-NYC. If you are not living in New York City, you will be referred to the nearest AIDS organization in your area. For more information, you can visit GMHC's website at www.gmhc.org.

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Where the Child Things Are: GMHC's playroom provides a safe haven for kids while parents receive care elsewhere in the center.

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David Andrews with one of the Native American "fancy shawls" he designs for cultural events.

Living Proof

that the search for a cure has paved a path of hope

David Andrews is HIV-positive. As a Native American from the Northern Nevada Paiute Nation, he took the news as a sign from "The Great Creator" that his work on earth was nearly done. But with the advent of a host of new medicines, including protease inhibitors, David was able to begin "a new cycle of life." Not long ago, David set out on a journey across the northwest to create a documentary called "Native Voices" that celebrates the pride and culture of Native Americans. Today, David participates in a Roche-sponsored program called "Reconstruction" that helps people living with HIV/AIDS plan for their future.

"Roche has been a major player in my life," David says. "Whenever I've read anything about HIV/AIDS medicines, research, education or awareness, Roche has always been involved."

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LAMENT IN GOOD WEATHER

So would this be how I'd remember my hands
(given the future's collapsing trellis):
pulling a weed (of all possible gestures),
trespassing the shade between toppled stalks?
A whole afternoon I spent chopping them back, no fruit
but a glut of yellow buds, the crop choked
this year by its own abundance, the cages
overrun. And me not fond of tomatoes, really,
something about how when you cut to their hearts
what you find is only a wetness and seeds,
wetness and seeds, wetness and seeds.
Still, my hands came gloved with their odor
into this room, where for days I've searched
but found no words to fit.
Bitter musky acrid stale—the scent
of hands once buried past the wrist in vines.

—LUCIA PERILLO

thems and in the dour chanting that accompanies techno dance rhythms. (This flexible border between high and low has enabled Adès to make some astonishing transitions to popular modes.) And concerts are cheaper. Although opera at Covent Garden is out of reach for most Brits, in the summer anyone can put down three pounds for a Proms concert and stand on the floor of the Royal Albert Hall. Last summer, on a few minutes' notice, I picked up a cheap ticket for a Berlin Philharmonic concert, under Claudio Abbado, and went down among the Prommers—smiling elderly matrons, distracted young couples, watchful, solitary teen-agers (Adèses of the future), and smelly record collectors with mad-professor hair (one of them shouting, "Abbado! A mere time-beater! Listen to Furtwängler!"). I heard a new piece by Wolfgang Rihm, the Schumann Piano Concerto, and the Brahms Third Symphony. The crowd cheered everything enthusiastically, including the Rihm, and let out the Prommers' ritual yell of "Heave-ho!" when the piano lid was raised. Nothing like this can be experienced in an American concert hall.

When I went to see several younger composers in London—among them, George Benjamin and Julian Anderson—they smiled at some of my touristic impressions but didn't deny the basic brightness of the picture. They all named as their largest benefactor the BBC's classical outlet, Radio 3, which dominates contemporary programming and commissions. "I don't think I would have even started composing at all without the experience of listening to it," Anderson told me. BBC 3 has lately slid somewhat in quality, but it remains the best classical radio on the planet, and it has resisted the worst dumbing down from above. There was a scare over the summer when cultural bureaucrats threatened to install, as the new head of BBC 3, a woman who had deemed the renowned pianist Alfred Brendel "too serious" to appear on a musical chat show. The higher-ups also gave consideration to a man who had promoted a semi-nude electric violinist named Vanessa-Mae. Norman Lebrecht, who covers the classical business in tragicomic tones for the *Daily Telegraph*, wrote, "The end is nigh for cerebral discourse and twelve-note flute sonatas, for reedy interval speakers and bedtime authorities on Welsh philology."

George Benjamin, who produces intricate, ravishing scores at a gradual pace, has been coördinating a BBC series called "Sounding the Century," which has delivered a stunningly wide panorama of twentieth-century music. "If Alfred Brendel is 'too serious,' we are all doomed," Benjamin said. Last month, the new head was announced,

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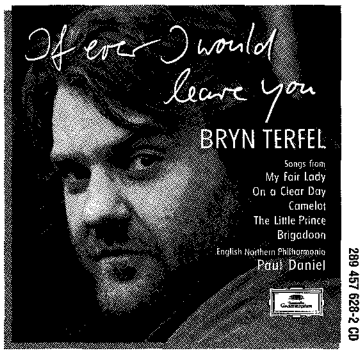

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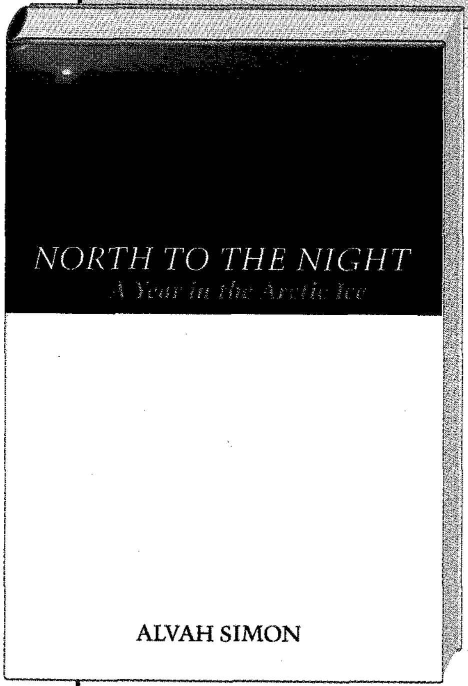

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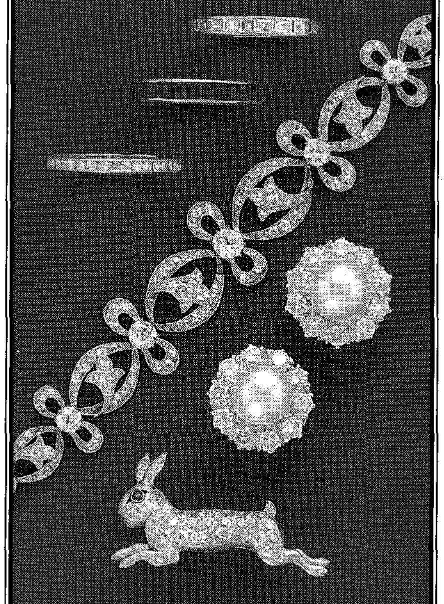

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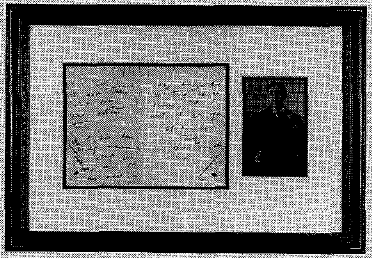

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and the anti-Brendel, striptease-violin faction lost out. The job went to a serious, seasoned person named Roger Wright. The composers exulted.

British composers haven't always made the most of their opportunities. The pastoral prettiness of prewar English music was duly followed by a prolonged cult of the opaque, the ugly, and the needlessly complicated. But British modernism was never as dogmatic as the European variety. "Perhaps because we came to it late," Anderson said, "we were able to pick and choose, and weren't so caught up in the whole avant-garde ideology." In the seventies and eighties, as composers around the world attempted some return to the old tonal language, British composers didn't have so far to go, and their music wasn't marked by violent stylistic lurches. Alexander Goehr and Oliver Knussen, for example, were able to weave common chords into their scores without arbitrarily reinventing themselves as Minimalists or Neo-Romantics. Knussen's recent Horn Concerto is emblematic of the best of contemporary English music: it is in D minor, for the most part, and yet it's an unfamiliar D minor, full of weird lights and icy currents. It draws equally on two seemingly irreconcilable traditions—the Romantic and the modern, the nineteenth century and the twentieth. What it doesn't do—and what Adès's music often does—is hit you between the eyes.

THOMAS ADÈS'S baroque family history seemed to guarantee that he would turn out to be interesting. One great-grandfather was a dashing Sephardic Jew of uncertain nationality who lived in Egypt and is said to have been the model for the character Nessim in Lawrence Durrell's "Alexandria Quartet." The patriarch on his mother's side of the family was descended from John of Gaunt and ran the Great Indian Railway. His father translates various modern and ancient languages, and his mother is a noted authority on Spanish art and Surrealism. He has two younger brothers, one of whom plays the tuba and is starting to compose. In such a household, Adès's creative urges were, not surprisingly, encouraged and indulged: his grandmother once sat him down and put Olivier Messiaen's mas-

"Cancel the warm milk. I don't think I'll need it."

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sive, delirious "Turangalîla" Symphony on the record player. Still, it took a while for Adès to turn to composition full time. He studied at the Guildhall School of Music, in London, attracting notice more as an all-around musician than as a composer: he was a virtuoso percussionist ("They said I was going to be a great marimba player," he recalls, a little wistfully), and later he made startling progress as a pianist. A school friend, Matias Tarnopolsky, remembers seeing a few of Adès's early creative efforts. "He showed me a clarinet piece in assembly," Tarnopolsky says. "He was at pains to explain to me that it was 'in arch form.'" (Tarnopolsky is now the producer of the BBC Symphony, and also writes program notes for Adès's pieces.)

In 1989, Adès won second prize as a pianist in the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition. "It was on TV, and it gave me quite a fright," Adès says. "I suddenly found myself at quite an advanced stage as a performer. I hadn't taken the idea very seriously. Everyone was commenting on this or that and I just didn't care—I wanted to go work on something new. Did I want to go through all this again, play the same things again? I went home and said, 'I'm going to become a composer today, and do it properly.' I started at the top note of the piano and went on from there."

"Five Eliot Landscapes," which he began that night, were later published as his Opus 1. (Most composers in the twentieth century haven't used opus numbers; Adès has resumed the practice.) Opus 2 was his Chamber Symphony, which he wrote while he was at King's College, Cambridge. "I realized how much hard work composing was going to be," he told me. "One can't compose slightly, much as one can't get slightly pregnant. But, when this piece was performed, suddenly it wasn't work at all; it was fantastic fun. Very frightening, too, at first. I remember starting the first rehearsal and thinking, I'm making this noise! It was so—you know—*modern*. It really did sound like horrible modern music: clicks here and pops there, scratching, screeching, one high note, one low note. The thing was now out of my hands; it was an organism crawling around on the instruments. I've never forgotten that moment. And after that, I didn't think about it again. I had no choice anymore."

"Horrible modern music" it isn't: the Chamber Symphony does begin with a ghostly tapping woodblock, but the flute and the viola unfold a sinuous B-minorish theme over the noise, and a little later the brass intone the "farewell" motto from Beethoven's "Les Adieux" Sonata. This is not to say that the piece uses conventional classical harmony: there's never a firm feeling of key, always a sense of one harmony unravelling into a distant second. One instrument may play along a major scale while another moves by half steps and a third goes by whole tones. Often, each instrument seems to be going off in its own direction, but Adès keeps everything under control, pulling in wayward strands, keeping thicker dissonances at bay, making the whole fiercely clear. Seemingly unconnected elements move together in a kind of many-footed Chinese-dragon motion, which is characteristic of Adès's music.

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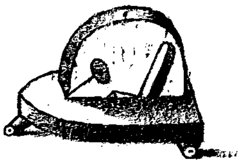
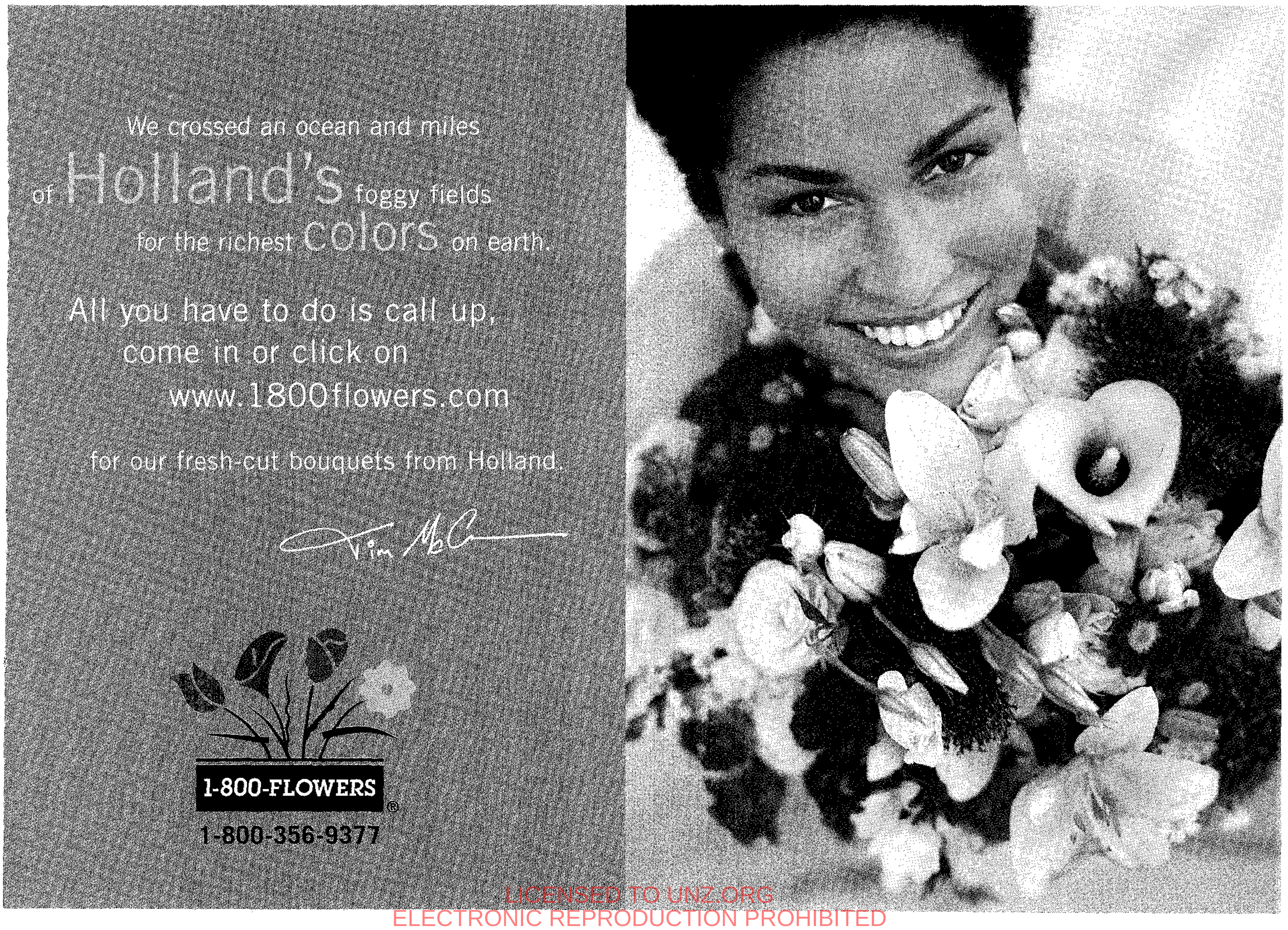
This was his sound; there was no hesitation or groping, not even at the start. With only two works down on paper, Adès was taken on by the small but élite publisher Faber Music, which promoted him vigorously. He consolidated his gains with an even more vivid and theatrical piece, called "Living Toys," which had an intricate narrative program, somehow connecting the adventures of a young Spanish matador with the death of the computer HAL, in "2001." Adès likes colorful, pungent titles: other examples are "These Premises Are Alarmed," ". . . but all shall be well," "Darknesse Visible," "Arcadiana," and "Life Story" (a bluesy setting of a Tennessee Williams poem about a one-night stand).

Before long, Adès was at work on his first opera, "Powder Her Face." The libretto was supplied by his friend Philip Hensher, a maverick novelist, who had lost his job as a Clerk of the House of Commons for speaking too frankly about homosexuality in the lower chamber. The conception for "Powder Her Face" was also destined to cause trouble. The opera tells of the freewheeling society beauty Margaret Whigham, who was later the Duchess of Argyll. Her divorce from the Duke, in 1963, set a standard for graphic sexual detail in the courtroom which makes the Starr report look timid. (The Duchess, who enjoyed oral sex, was photographed ministering to a male friend whose face was missing from the frame. The court attempted to identify the stranger by way of a "physical imperfection.") Hensher seized the opportunity to create the first onstage blow job in opera history, but he also twisted the story into something more generalized and expressionistic: Margaret becomes a half-comic, half-tragic figure, a nitwit outlaw. There were clear parallels with Alban Berg's epic of degradation, "Lulu." The aging Duchess, in her unpaid-for hotel room, looks back on her life in a series of dreamy flashbacks: the hotel staff play roles from her life and simultaneously mock her. At the end, the hotel manager, doubling as Death, throws her out. The libretto reads like a nasty farce, but it takes on emotional breadth when the music is added. With a few incredibly seductive stretches of thirties-era popular melody, Adès shows the giddy world that the Duchess lost, and when her bright harmony lurches down to a terrifying B-flat minor he exposes the male cruelty that quickened her fall. Adès's harmonic tricks have a powerful theatrical impact: there's a repeated sense of a beautiful mirage shattering into cold, alienated fragments.



"Powder Her Face" put Adès at the forefront of English composers. He received a commission for a major opera to be given at Covent Garden; pending an end to the chaos in that house, it will appear in 2001. (The librettist is the poet James Fenton, and the plot will have something to do with cults.) Since then, native enthusiasm for him has grown to potentially stifling proportions. He has continued his piano career, taken up conducting, succeeded



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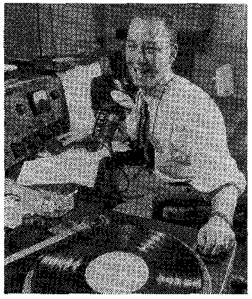

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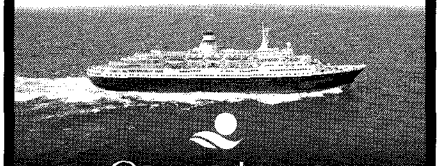

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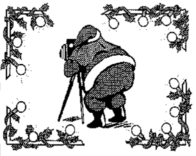

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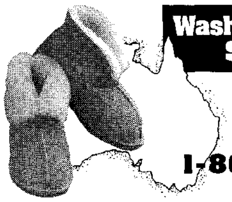

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Knussen as the artistic director of Britten's Aldeburgh Festival, become the director of the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, and signed with the EMI label. He is in danger of taking on too much. He has written several works under severe time constraints, and has suffered the consequences. There was a moment during the composition of "Asyla," last summer, when he thought that he was having a heart attack. He checked himself into the hospital, and it turned out that he had started hyperventilating from the exertion of copying identical rhythmic figures in dozens of parts of his score.

The music he was working on during this crisis was a movement entitled "Ecstasio." It depicted a night out in a London club, and he was trying to replicate by hand the blistering fast pulses of techno music—patterns that are meant to be spat out by a computer. (Many composers these days create scores with a computer program that does for composition what word processing does for writing. Adès believes that these programs corrupt musical thought by allowing the composer to fill in every orchestral detail bar by bar, rather than sketch a complete structure in advance.) The pressure he felt during the writing of "Asyla" wasn't just a matter of time: he also knew that the piece—a commission for Simon Rattle and the City of Birmingham Symphony—would be judged as his first big orchestral statement.

This hurdle he passed as well. "Asyla"—the title is the plural of "asylum"—is big, deep, and enthralling. It seems to work both by intellectual logic and by raw emotion: you can sit forward and follow the progress of the dipping-and-rising notes of the opening theme in various backward or mirror-image configurations, or else you can sit back and experience its cinematic succession of scenes. The first movement is dominated by a proudly limping theme that is not unlike the subject of Bach's Passacaglia and Fugue in C Minor, except that it keeps floating up instead of winding down: it gets lost in high, hazy, luminous chords, even as violent dancing figures—a forecast of "Ecstasio"—break in. The second

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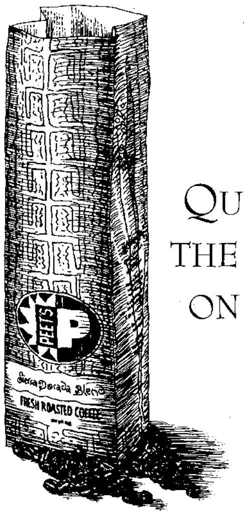
movement is melancholy, depressive: when it seems to reach a state of paralysis, Adès reshuffles the intervals of the principal theme to produce a sprawling Wagnerian theme on the cellos. (When I ran into Simon Rattle after one rehearsal, he wondered aloud, "Where do these ideas come from?") The magical, menacing "Ecstasio" is next: it begins with a distant whine, like a buzz in the head, and then launches into block-rocking beats, hysterical chanting choirs, whoops, and whistles. Adès has moved from the abstract argument of the first movement to something like brutal realism here. On top of the dance beat he re-creates the club's atmosphere: the buzz of the crowd, the thrill of contact, the danger of contact, a couple of apparent stumbles or accidents, and assorted noises in the brain, some of which—as the movement's title suggests—are drug-related. The mechanical music of the club undergoes multiple distortions in the observer's ears, and, in so doing, becomes genuinely musical. It's hard to tell whether the protagonist is having a good time. Shortly before the end, there's a precious sigh in the strings which sounds like a wistful thought of bed. But the dance resumes.

One of Adès's closest friends is the novelist Alan Hollinghurst, whose new book, "The Spell," contains a scene that parallels the dance sequence in "Asyla." A well-behaved civil servant falls in with a club-going kid, takes Ecstasy, goes out to a raunchy London club, and finds his bourgeois values in free fall. Adès pointed this out to me by way of recounting the pleasure he gets from contemporary London and from intellectual company that doesn't cloister itself from popular culture. But there are obvious differences between what Hollinghurst is doing in his book and what Adès is doing in his music. Hollinghurst is telling a story: he moves on to the next chapter. Adès has only an impression of a place, an atmosphere. He told me that he'd had a great deal of trouble finding appropriate music to follow the scary hedonism of "Ecstasio." His solution was a brief, halting, sickly-sounding sequence of chorales which climaxes very suddenly with an imperious statement in the dismal key of E-flat minor. The music tapers into



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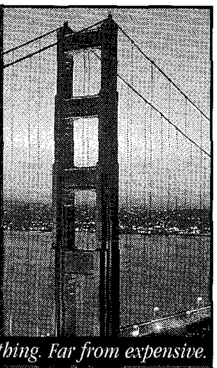

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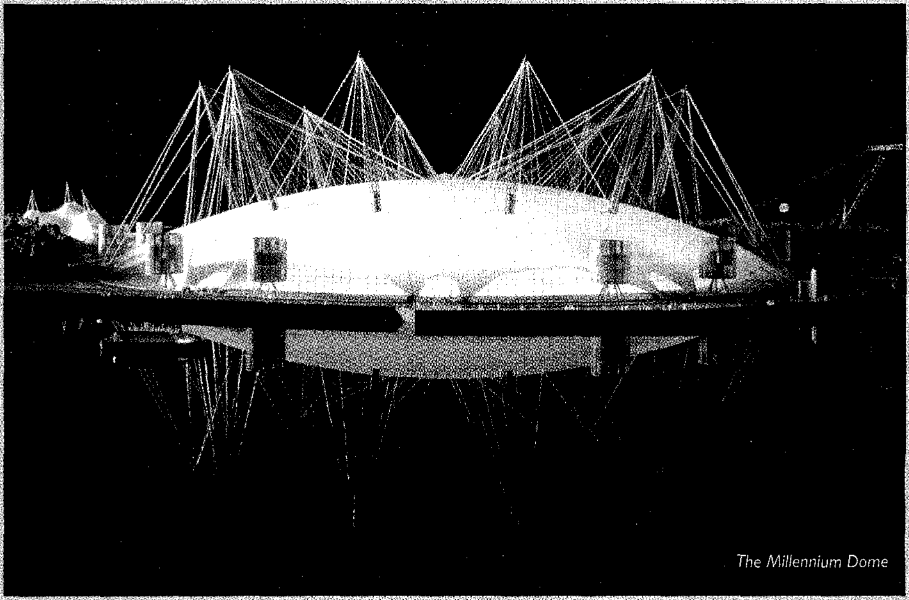
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The United Kingdom and the U.S. are bound firmly in friendship and respect. The warm welcome that Cherie and I received in Washington on my last official visit was proof, if indeed any was needed, of just how close our relationship is. However, this relationship is only in part down to politics. Most of it is developed, nurtured, and improved by contact between people—whether through business, culture, sport, or simply the pleasure of visiting each other's country.

This year, beyond the historic sights and rich traditions of Britain, visitors will be able to see our preparations for the new Millennium celebration. This, combined with economic vigor, has added to our offering of world-class restaurants, shops, hotels, and attractions, and created a new sense of dynamism throughout the country. First-time and return visitors will experience the aspects of Britain that we are so proud of, both the traditional and new. From the engineering marvel of the Millennium Dome, with its twenty acres of enclosed space, to the haunting majesty of Stonehenge; the historic market towns, to the Tate Gallery expansion, truly there is something for everyone.

The cities of London and New York both have long traditions as financial centres. Their influence in monetary, social, industrial, and cultural spheres is felt around the world. Whether it is a play opening on Broadway or the West End, the closing prices on the London or New York stock exchanges, the newest fashions or corporate mergers, the attention focused on our two nations is unrivaled. Such rich, common experiences make our relationship unique and important.

We are very proud of our country, but also excited about its future. I sincerely hope that we can welcome many more of you so you can see the best of Britain firsthand. I would also like to ask the many business visitors from the U.S. to extend their stays and get to know us better. I am sure all our visitors will find their stays in Britain to be enjoyable, interesting, and memorable.

Tony Blair

GUCCI
PRADA

Courtesy of the British Tourist Authority

by Susan Sommers

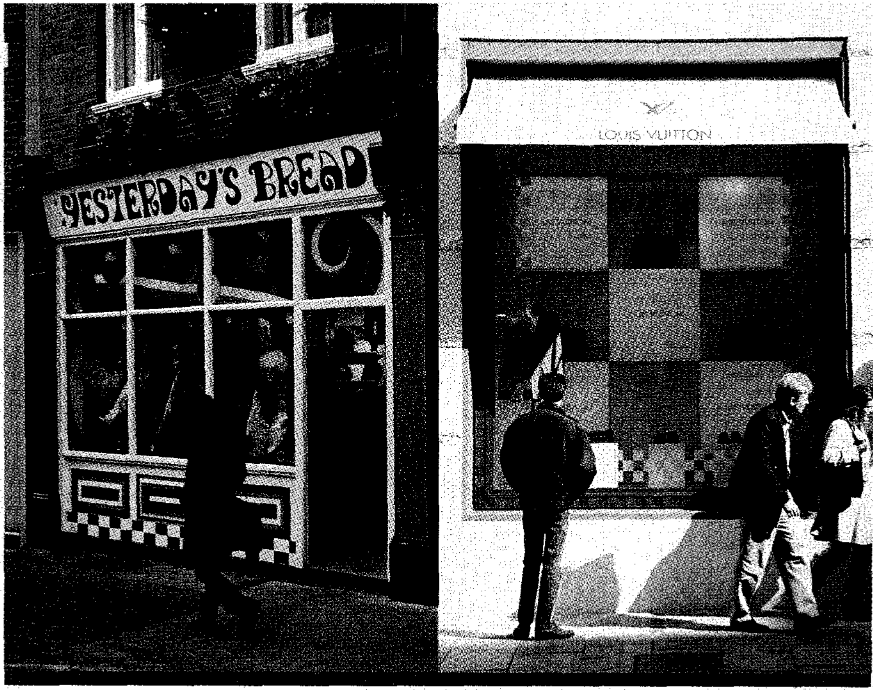
PREPARE

London's millennium centerpiece will be the 181-acre Millennium Experience and Dome where thousands of spectators will be able to watch a multimedia spectacular. A current must-see is the Visitor Centre in Greenwich, which offers a preview of the Dome. Nearby, a digital countdown clock in the Old Royal Observatory in Greenwich Park, the historic center of world time, ticks off the seconds to the year 2000. Ongoing information about millennium celebrations and events is available at the website: www.usagateway.visitbritain.com.

For those whose notion of the future extends no farther than the coming holidays, there's good news. Stores all over town are bursting with gifts for everyone on your holiday list. Who wants Beatles memorabilia? The shop, Beatles For Sale, recently opened on Kingly Street.

Yes, London is a unique cultural feast...and never better to visit than now, as you will discover when you peruse the pages ahead.

(continued on pg. 6a)



This page: Browsers along Carnaby, Bond, and (above) *Sloane streets.*

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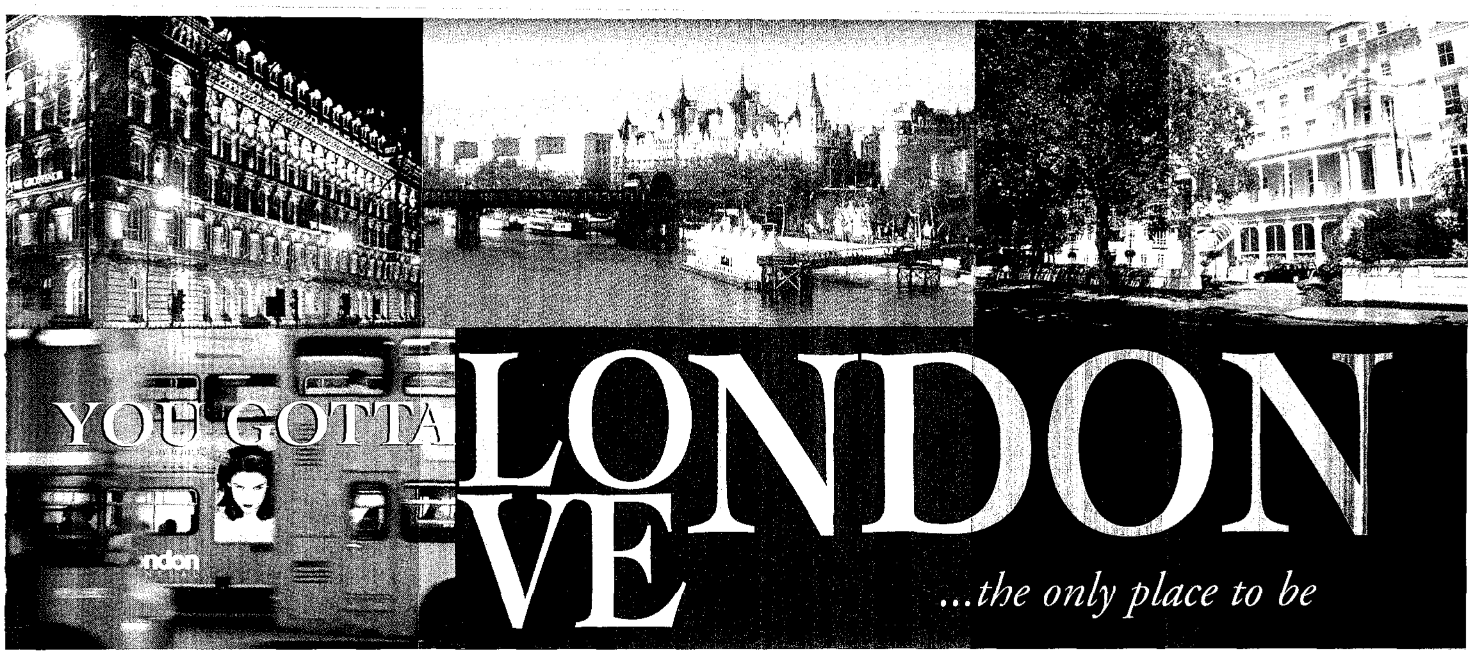

Photos, left to right: The Grosvenor Thistle, The Royal Horseguards, Whites Hotel.

YOU LOVE LONDON

London—one of the world's oldest cities—is the getaway you've been looking for. At once classic and current, creative and traditional, it represents the best of the multicultural nineties and the coming millennium. Truly, the old meets the new here: from Big Ben to the Millennium Dome to the city's royal pageantry and its corner pubs. As the cultural and arts hub of Europe, London is also a world center for creativity in the visual and performing arts, fashion, and its nightlife. This cosmopolitan city has something for everyone. And because it's ever changing, there's always more to see and do. Come see it soon.

YOU LOVE THEATRE

London, of course, is the world center for theatre. A selective list of some West End hits (and expected hits) this season includes: "Antony and Cleopatra," "The Blue Room," "Richard III," "Phèdre," "Alarms & Excursions," "Art," "Closer," "The Mousetrap," "Cleo, Camping, Emmanuelle and Dick," and "Britannicus."

London also features long-running worldwide favorites including "Les Misérables" and "Cats," new hits like "Chicago" and "Saturday Night Fever," and great dramas such as "An Inspector Calls," "Popcorn," and "Woman in Black." Whatever your sensibility, London theatre will satisfy it.

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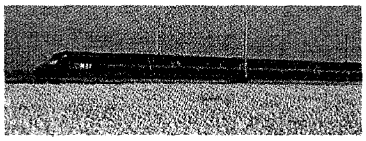

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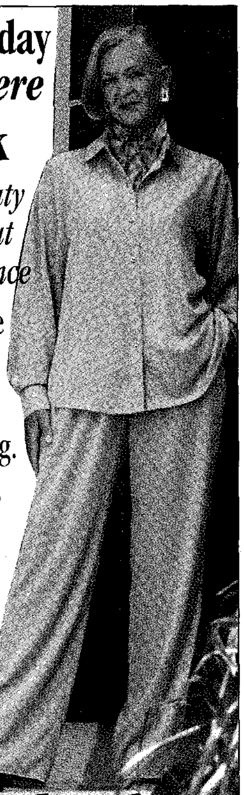

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Fiennes and Blanchett star in "Elizabeth."

BE ROYALLY ENTERTAINED

Of all of this extraordinary city's incarnations, one of the most interesting is sixteenth-century London during the reign of Elizabeth I. Her rise to power and her transformation from an intelligent, vital young woman into the legendary Virgin Queen is the subject of "Elizabeth," an exciting new film due next month from Gramercy Pictures. Directed by Shekhar Kapur, it stars Cate Blanchett as Elizabeth. The international cast includes Geoffrey Rush, Joseph Fiennes (Ralph's younger brother), Christopher Eccleston, Richard Attenborough, and Kathy Burke.

The daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth was imprisoned by her half-sister Mary when she was only sixteen, then swept into power and crowned Queen of England at twenty-three. To survive, she had to unmask covert plots in her court, on the battlefield, in the church, and even in those closest to her. The male-dominated ruling class had the advantage, leaving Elizabeth to deploy whatever means necessary to keep, or take, what was rightly hers. In the end, she did what was necessary to secure her throne.

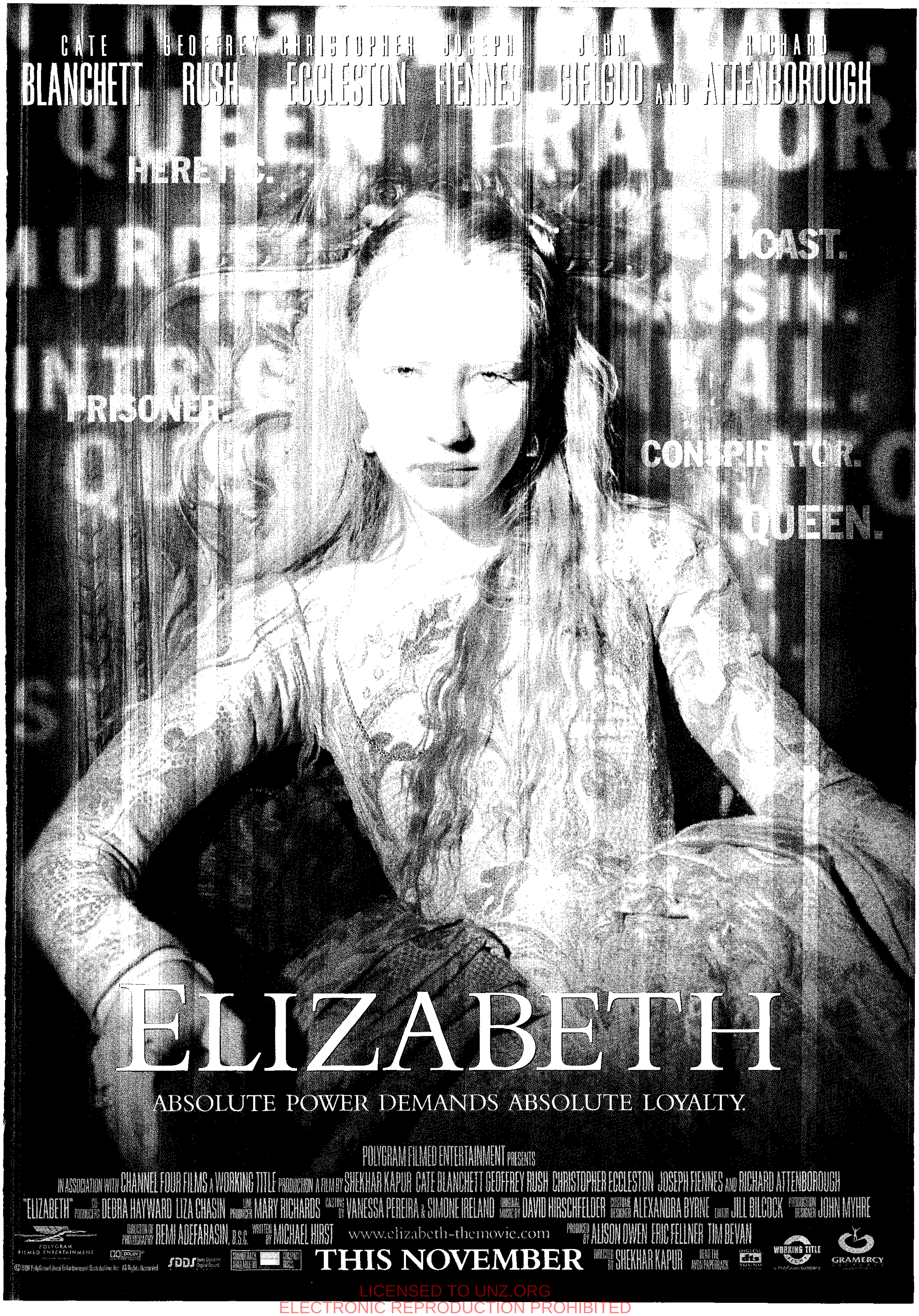
"Elizabeth" was filmed in some of the most spectacular historical locations in Britain including Hadden Hall in Derbyshire, home of the Duke of Rutland, which dates back to William the Conqueror. The Tudor house has retained many of its original features including its sixteenth-century gardens, believed by many to be the most romantic in all of England. It is in this garden that Cate Blanchett's character receives word that she is the new Queen of England.

Other scenes were filmed at several of the finest castles in Northumberland. One of the most impressive was Alnwick Castle, the ancestral home of the Duke of Northumberland, which dominates the medieval market town of Alnwick. Here, the young Elizabeth was arrested along with her loyal followers.

The isolated splendor of Bamburgh Castle dates back to Saxon times. It presides over the Northumbrian landscape, which served as the coast of England for the film. Interiors of the dark cells and torture chambers of twelfth-century Warkworth Castle were used to depict the Tower of London. Bolton Castle in North Yorkshire has remained virtually untouched since the 1400s. It figures prominently as the castle where Mary Queen of Scots was confined on her way to the Tower. Raby Castle, with its great battlement, was the filmic location for a spectacular river pageant.

Scenes of the royal hunting lodge were filmed at Chillingham Castle, while Durham Cathedral in County Durham doubled as Whitehall Palace portraying dramatic sequences of the Royal Court, State Room, and Chapel. The Queen's coronation took place at the historical York Minster in North Yorkshire.

If being royally entertained is not enough, the film brings to life Elizabethan London, so that when you visit the Elizabethan sites still intact, like Middle Temple Hall, Staple Inn, and the Lady Chapel inside Westminster Abbey, you will see them in an entirely new light.



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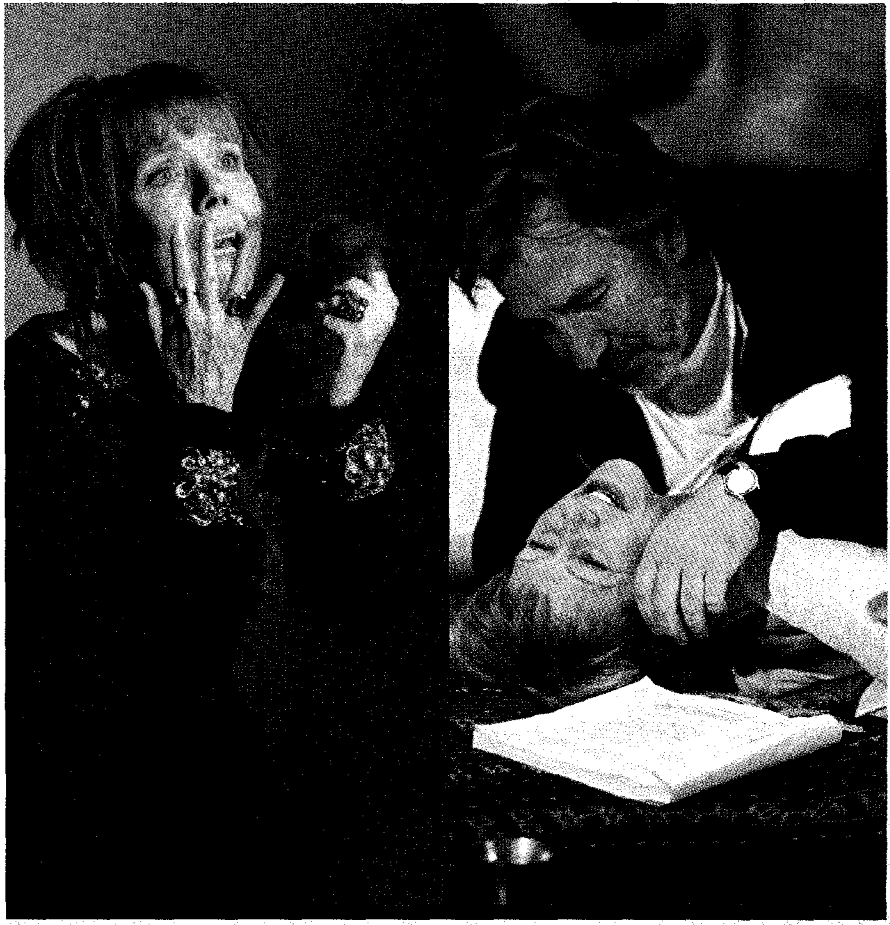
APPLAUD

The sheer range and diversity of London's theatrical offerings is staggering. In the West End alone, more than fifty large and small venues showcase a mix of classics, farces, musicals, and original dramas, making the city a magnet for lovers of all theatrical genres. Fly over in the next day or two and you'll be able to catch the final performance of one of Britain's great stage and screen stars, Judi Dench, playing a former prostitute from Naples in the comedy, "Filumena" (at the Piccadilly through the end of December). If you don't get there in time, you can still see two other divas. Diana Rigg is "Phèdre" in a new Ted Hughes' translation of Racine's finest play (at the Albery Theatre through the end of November). Meanwhile, Helen Mirren has returned to the stage after a four-year hiatus to play Cleopatra alongside Alan Rickman in "Antony and Cleopatra" (at the Royal National Theatre until December 3rd).

"The Invention of Love," Tom Stoppard's new work, explores the parallel lives of A.E. Houseman and Oscar Wilde (at the Theatre Royale, Haymarket from November 3rd). Revivals are in full flower with an ambitious production of Harold Pinter's play, "Betrayal" (at the Lyttelton from November 24th). Peter Shaffer's "Amadeus" stars David Suchet as Salieri (at the Old Vic from October 21st).

An indispensable resource for keeping on top of the changing theatre scene is the *London Theatre News* (212-517-8608), which doubles as a ticket broker this side of the Atlantic.



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Diana Rigg in "Phèdre." Right: *Helen Mirren and Alan Rickman in rehearsal for the title roles in "Antony and Cleopatra."*

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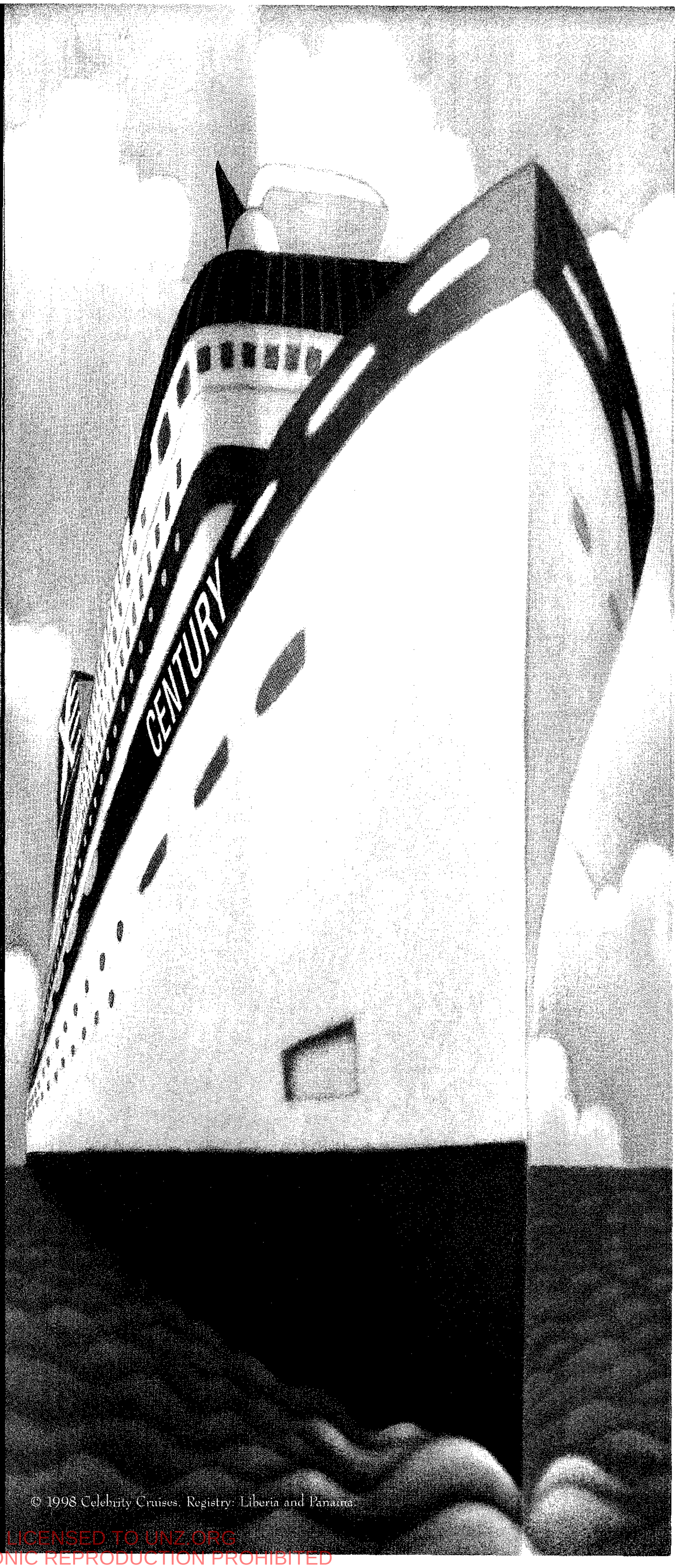

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TASTE

All the world's a stage and that includes restaurants. Their proliferation rivals theatre openings and they offer diversity in cultures, cuisine, and décor. One well placed for pre- or post-theatre dining is Teatro, in the heart of the West End. Décor is minimalist with diners as the principal players, and the food is French despite the restaurant's Italian name. A hot, Kensington newcomer catering to London's smart set is Pasha, which is North African in flavor and interior design.

A pair of recently opened spots in the city are creating a stir. Next to the Bank of England, Coq D'Argent, a Conran venture, serves French regional dishes amidst panoramic views of historic London. Just across the way is 1 Lombard Street, a bank turned brasserie, featuring classical European fare with a modern slant.

For pizza or panini on the run, Café Milan Retail, which is opening on King's Road at the end of October, might be just the ticket.

SEE

The breadth of art exhibitions literally insures there is something for everyone. Royal lovers will want to celebrate Prince Charles's fiftieth birthday by visiting "Travels With the Prince," a display of fifty landscapes by HRH at Hampton Court Palace (November 14th through February 28th). Those who delight in the strange and iconoclastic should be mesmerized by the exquisite, fin de siècle drawings of prolific illustrator Aubrey Beardsley, at the Victoria & Albert Museum (through January 10th). While there, if photography is your passion, be sure to see Henri Cartier-Bresson's photographs from the Americas and Asia (November 26th through April 12th).

At the Royal Academy of Arts in Piccadilly, the first major exhibition of Picasso's largely ignored ceramics are on view (through December 16th). While a new Monet exhibit, "Monet in the 20th Century" (January 21st through April 18th) provides radical new insights into the artist's method of working.

Modernist furniture is the theme of "The Work of Charles and Ray Eames," two of the country's top tastemakers at the Design Museum (through January 3rd). On its heels comes "Modern Britain 1927-1939," to inaugurate the museum's exciting millennium exhibition (January 19th through July 18th). Incidentally, the Courtauld Gallery in Somerset House has been completely restored and refurbished, and reopens on October 30th, with its important

Covent Garden Piazza: London's trendy restaurant and market area.

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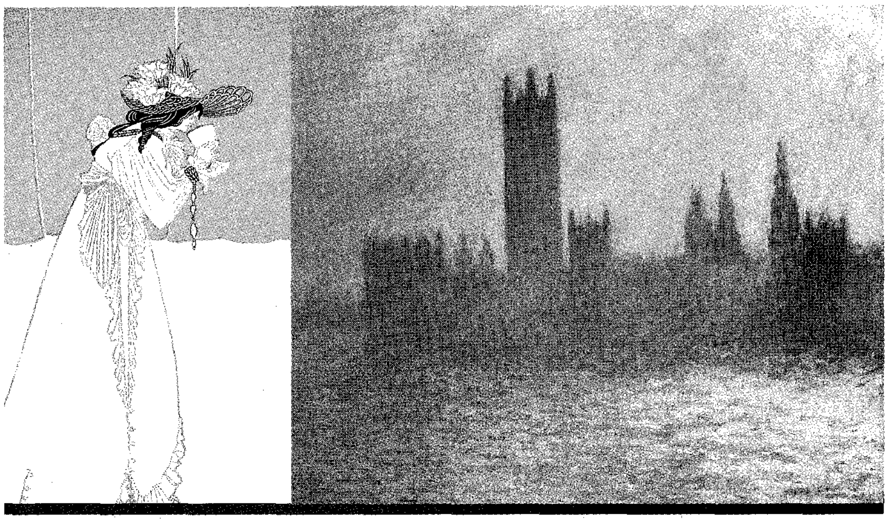

Aubrey Beardsley's "Isolde" at the Victoria & Albert Museum. Right: Monet exhibit scheduled for the Royal Academy of Arts.

collection of Impressionist paintings newly mounted and relit.

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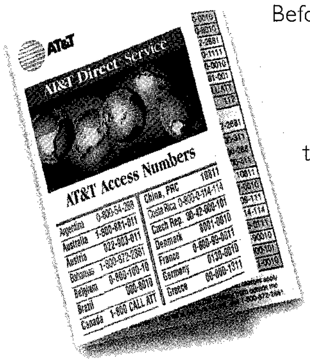

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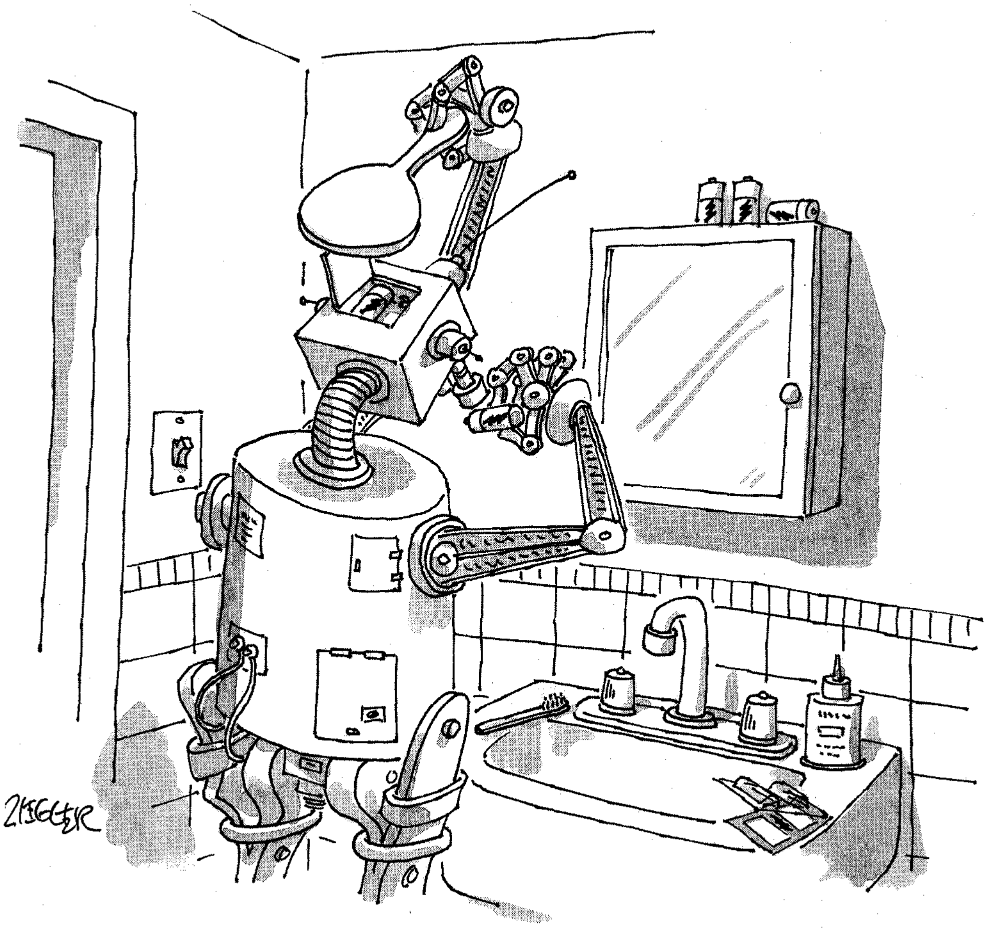

silence immediately thereafter. This ending is intensely strange and intensely moving: the whole orchestra joins in the tragic utterance, but the gesture feels self-conscious, solitary, like a shout of anger on an empty street. It is, in the end, unexpectedly uplifting—happy anger, a release.

That's what I hear, at least. Certain works of art become our private property: they speak to us by making us speak to ourselves. "Asyla" became for me an eerie kind of mirror. I had been feeling shocks of recognition in Adès's music ever since I first heard it, in 1995, at the Aldeburgh Festival. Adès and I are about the same age, and I stopped trying to write music at about the age when he took it up seriously. Sometimes during "Asyla" I felt that I was hearing ideas that had once flickered in my head. This was pure fantasy, of course, but it brought home to me with unusual immediacy Emerson's dictum that "in every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts." Adès's themes often seem uncannily familiar—sometimes because they are ingeniously disguised variations and sometimes because they have the symmetrical, shapely quality that used to be called "inspiration." I have no idea whether "Asyla" has a similar effect on others or whether I will get the same charge out of it in ten or twenty years. But I am certain that works by this composer will enter the repertory of the future. The animal organism that Adès let loose in the Chamber Symphony is multiplying; he acts like its bemused caretaker. There were awesome moments during the rehearsals for "Asyla" when Simon Rattle subdivided the orchestra, asking different groups of instruments to play separately, and fresh little Adès pieces emerged.

The impact that "Asyla" had on me created some confusion in my talks with its creator. Suddenly, there were a lot of selves about: the person in front of me, the voice behind the piece, the version of myself which I heard in it. Adès resisted my attempts to bring them all together—to track down a cogent story in "Asyla," or even a system. I pestered him by E-mail, and he retreated into gnomic aphorisms. "There is no atonal music, there is no tonal music" was the last message I received. In a way, he was playing a game: by releasing one bit of information and withholding the rest, he had created an enticing mystery. But his resistance to my queries seemed to go deeper. I had run up against a wall of reticence in a mostly voluble and generous personality. Adès doesn't like to see or hear his music described: he is unyielding on this subject. Any generalization is a threat. Even compliments distress him—he can't hear the particular positive qualities that people single out. "I stopped listening after a certain point," he told me. "One person would come up to me and say, 'There was such strong continuity in your harmony.' The next person would say, 'Wonderful, I was expecting the harmony to be more continuous.' Composers say strange things. They mention only what's useful to them. I'm not friends with many composers. I like the reactions I get from non-musicians. In Manchester, when we did 'These Premises Are Alarmed' "—a brief, spectacular curtain-raiser piece—"I had these fantastic teen-agers, very cool, heads buried under anoraks, coming up to me, saying, 'Loiked it when it got loud.' "

This may seem a higher, more perverse form of arrogance, to find fault with all but one's dimmest flatterers. But Adès's perpetual dissatisfaction with descriptions of himself may really stem from an uncertainty about who he is and where he is going. He may still identify more with slouching teen-agers than with the eminences of musical London. He is unsure of and protective of his second self—that wild, unpredictable, electrifying voice. He doesn't know whether he recognizes it as such. "I'm twenty-seven—perhaps I will find my true voice at the age of fifty, or fifty-one, like Janáček," he mused. "Everyone will be very shocked. It will be a very small and ugly one." He burst out laughing. For once, he seemed to have no idea what he was talking about. Either that or he had found a typically saturnine and serpentine way of saying, "You ain't seen nothing yet." ♦

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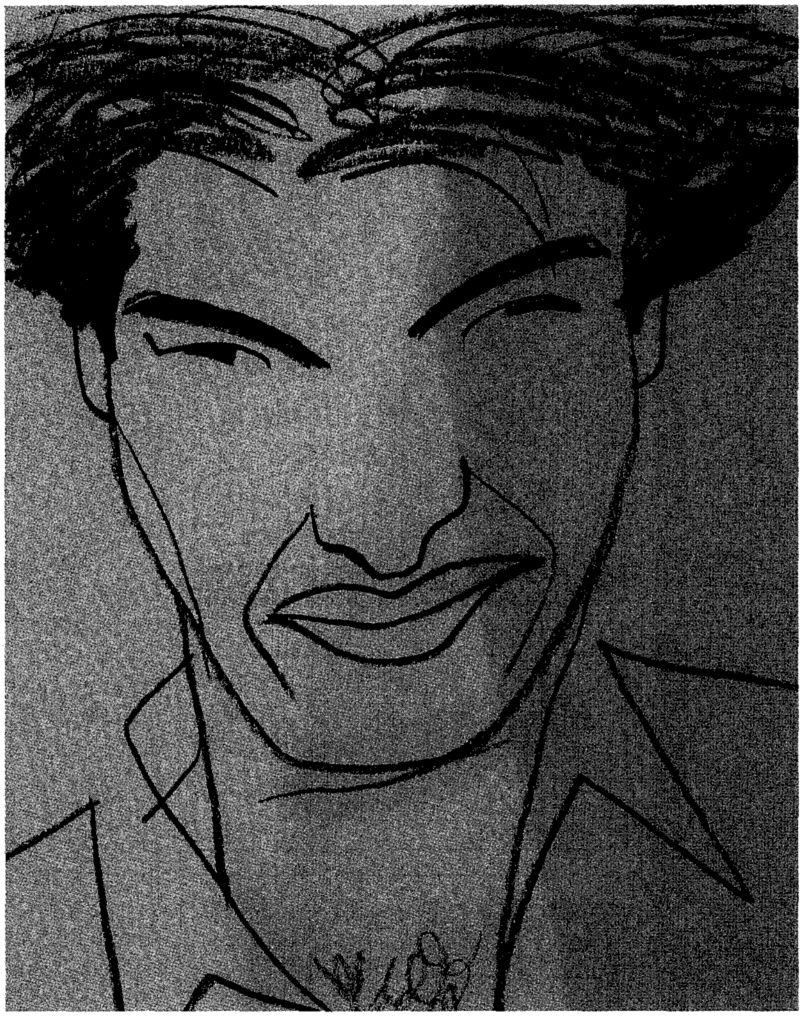
ANNALS OF STYLE

BIG HAIR

Frédéric Fekkai sees his name alongside Gucci and Chanel in the global marketplace.

BY MIMI SWARTZ

OVER the summer, a sleek rectangular handbag was delivered to a few dozen women in the United States and Europe. The bag had been made in Italy, of the softest calfskin. It was large enough to contain the necessities of any busy, successful woman, but its exterior was unsullied by straps, pockets, or flaps. The bag had delicate wrought-iron handles, buffed and silvery, but not too shiny. It was bright blue—not a loud, garish blue but an assertive, jaunty blue that was evocative of the sky above Provence. The bag was named Justine, possibly to capitalize on a literary association but more likely because in this country, at least, a French name lends any object an aura of mystery, sophistication, and good taste.



Fekkai is hoping his celebrity translates into a brand.

MATS GUSTAFSON

In Manhattan, Martha Stewart, Elle MacPherson, Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy, and Sigourney Weaver were given this gift, as were Anna Wintour and Liz Tilberis, the editors of *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*, respectively. In Los Angeles, Sandra Bullock received the bag, and so did Claire Danes, Ashley Judd, and Gwyneth Paltrow.

Each gift was a testament to the recipient's power as a trendsetter. The bag's creator hoped that some of these women would be photographed carrying Justine—in *W*, *Women's Wear Daily*, *Vogue*, *Bazaar*, *Allure*, or *In Style*, for instance—and that these photographs would provoke a subliminal but powerful lust within other women, which would reach its peak about now, when the next version of Justine (in a rigorous but supple and decidedly autumnal black) arrives in a very few of the nation's best stores. Selling for five hundred and sixty dollars, it is the star of a new accessory line launched by a man named Frédéric Fekkai.

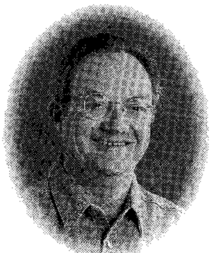
In certain circles—particularly in Manhattan—the name Frédéric Fekkai is well known. But until now Fekkai, who is thirty-eight, has been famous as a celebrity hairdresser, whose work at one time or another has appeared on the heads of many prominent women, ranging from Hillary Clinton, to Jane Pauley and Diane Sawyer, to Ellen DeGeneres and Ann Heche. Fekkai invented the perfect cut for professional women just when professional women were coming into their own: it was a bob, sometimes short, sometimes grazing the shoulders, that was full and softly tousled, and often had a brush of age-concealing bangs across the forehead. Before Fekkai, a woman with power had helmet hair, like Margaret Thatcher's; after Fekkai, she had more of an I-just-got-laid look. In New York City in the early nineties, a Fekkai haircut became the equivalent of an Armani suit; it was an easily recognized status signifier, known well to those who knew well enough to know. Only ten years after he arrived in New York, in 1983, with little more than a pair of scissors, Fekkai was running one of the most lucrative salons in the city and was commuting by private helicopter from his impeccably appointed East Side apartment to a house on the best lane in the Hamptons.

"When I was growing up in the South of France, I knew from a young age that I wanted to be with the most interesting people," Fekkai explains. "I had a vision of myself being in the art world, in fashion, at a very high level." He is now good friends with Bob Pittman, the head of America Online; with Jann Wenner, the founder of *Rolling Stone;* and with Ron Perelman, the chairman of Revlon. His ambitions are equally expansionist. With substantial backing from Chanel, Fekkai has launched an eponymous beauty empire, which, in addition to new Fekkai salons in New York and Los Angeles, includes a hair-care line, a hair-accessories line, a skin-care line, a makeup line, sunglasses, and, as of this fall, handbags and scarves. A Frédéric Fekkai boutique will open next month on Madison Avenue, and there are more on the drawing board.

The Fekkai plan has been greeted with some skepticism in the beauty industry, though few people will express their reservations on the record. "The person who pays three hundred dollars for a haircut"—Fekkai charges two hundred and ninety dollars plus tax—"I promise is not going to pay for a pair of Frédéric Fekkai sunglasses," says Heidi Schulze, a well-established makeup artist in Houston. "Women who go to Frédéric for hair buy Gucci or Chanel." Yet Fekkai believes that he can give his own name equal cachet in today's global marketplace. His hair (jet-black) falls over his forehead in an exquisite cascade, his eyes (also black) shimmer, his teeth gleam white, his skin is a burnished, multicultural brown. (One of his grandparents is Vietnamese, another is Egyptian.) He moves in ways that suggest to both men and women a certain sexual sophistication, and his French accent is undiluted by the many years in Manhattan. Fekkai also has excellent taste—in clothes, in food, in furnishings, and in travel. (He married his first wife on a boat off St. Barts.) In the words of Rino Jasper, an old friend and colleague, "He mesmerizes women." Fekkai's famous manner with clients is a careful blend of flattery and advice that seems to ease the toll of stress, age, and ambition. "It isn't the haircuts, it's the persona" is the way one former employee puts it, an opinion shared by both Fekkai loyalists and detractors.

One morning in May, the designer Adrienne Vittadini and the actress Lorraine Bracco had appointments in the Manhattan salon. Then the socialite Carol Petrie came in, looking exhausted and out of date with her lacquered hairdo. While Fekkai was softening her hair style, he also caressed her shoulders, frequently touched her arms, and took obvious pleasure in everything she said. Within fifteen minutes, Petrie looked decades younger. "You always make me look modern," she said gratefully.

Lynn Wyatt, the wife of the Houston multimillionaire Oscar Wyatt, also arrived for a blow-dry. Wyatt has looked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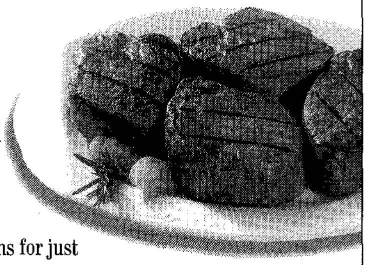

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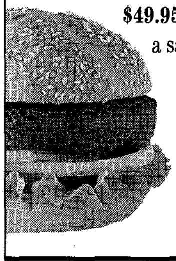

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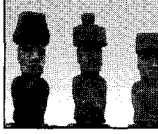
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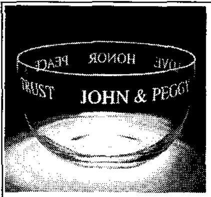
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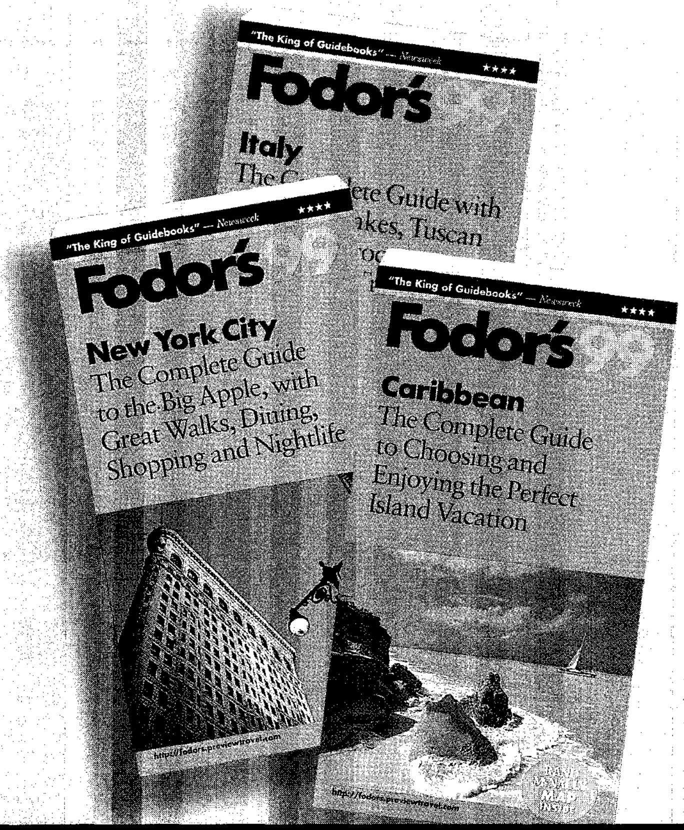
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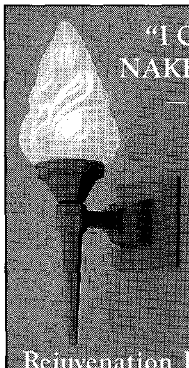

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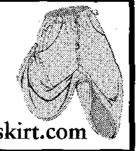


essentially the same since she burst on the social scene, more than thirty years ago: trim, beautiful, always perfectly turned out, and with her hair, big and blond, styled in what is referred to back home as "fried, dyed, and shoved to the side."

"I love the length," Fekkai said, embracing Wyatt and then placing her in the chair. "Your hair looks grrreat. The color, who did it?"

"Paris, Paris," chanted Wyatt, who takes many of her style cues from Karl Lagerfeld, at Chanel.

Fekkai's publicist, Sydney Goldman, materialized—a very slim, pretty young woman with short, tousled hair and a polished manner. She was bearing Fekkai's "Look Book," a small album covered in the company's trademark Provence blue. Inside were photographs of the fall handbag line. As Goldman looked on intently, Wyatt began inspecting the book while Fekkai and an assistant used blow-dryers on her already dry hair.

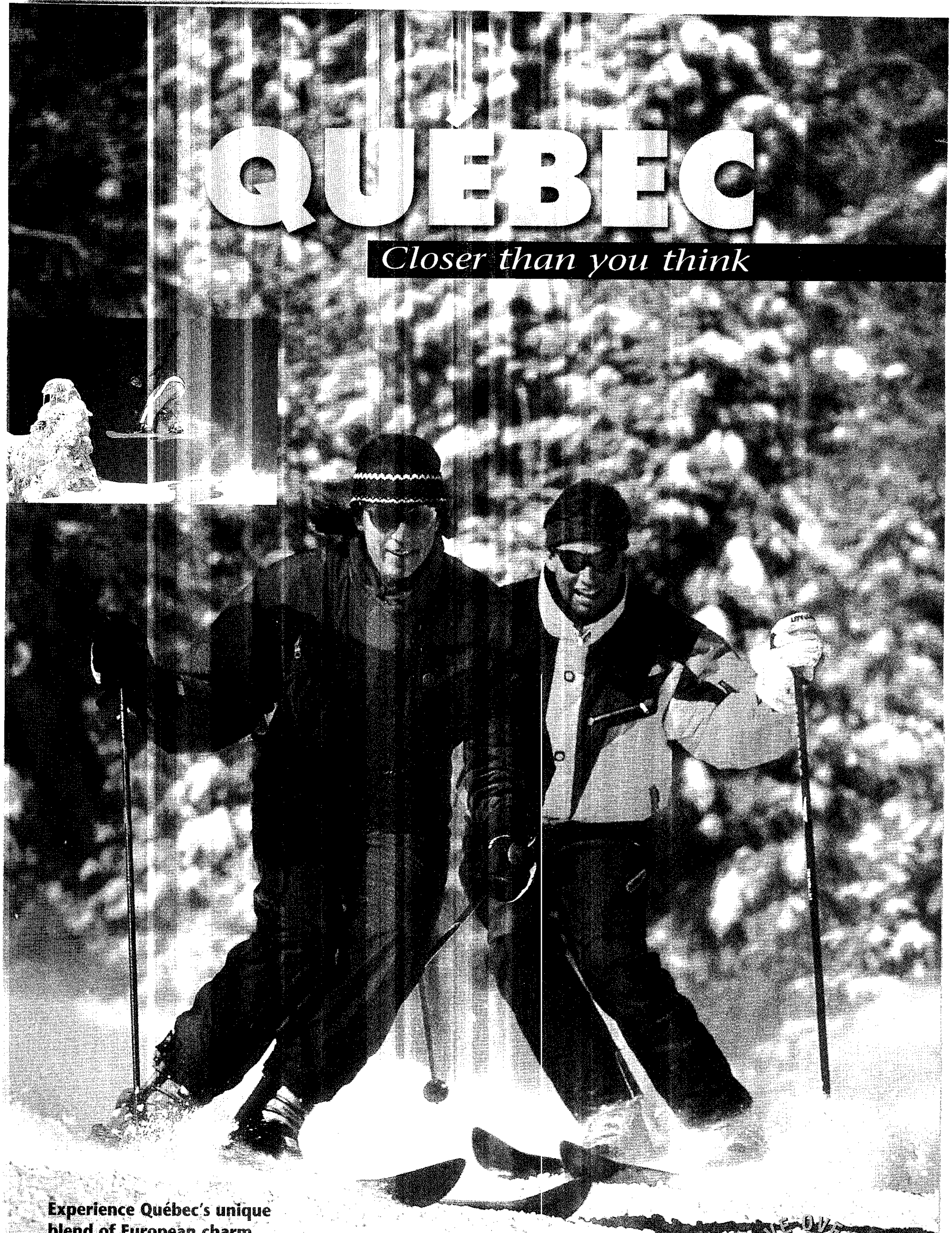
"Ooo," Wyatt cooed, flipping the pages. "Ah luv it. Ah luv it." Then she stopped, pointed a manicured finger at one particular purse, and asked, "Is this a soft leather?"

"Very soft," Goldman answered, nodding.

The corners of Wyatt's mouth tightened: a world traveller, she worries about scratches. Quickly grasping this, Goldman assured her that the bag would also come in twill.

After Fekkai finished Wyatt's hair, Goldman offered to show her the new line of sunglasses downstairs. Fekkai hugged Wyatt as she left, but after a few fidgety seconds he disappeared, too, leaving a mystified, noncelebrity client in the chair. He reappeared after ten minutes or so, breathless and elated. His eyes were wild, and his hair was dishevelled. "Lynn took two pairs of sunglasses!" he said excitedly, as he reached for his scissors.

Fekkai is counting on word of mouth among his celebrity clients to move the new products. It is not an uncommon strategy in the accessories business; both Prada and Gucci created a demand for their expensive leather goods by giving them away to visible, stylish people. But the aura of exclusivity and glamour which Fekkai originally created in his New York salon was based in large part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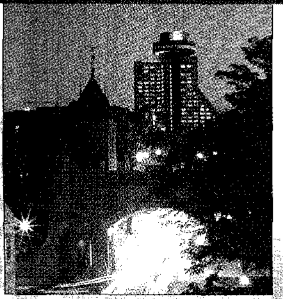

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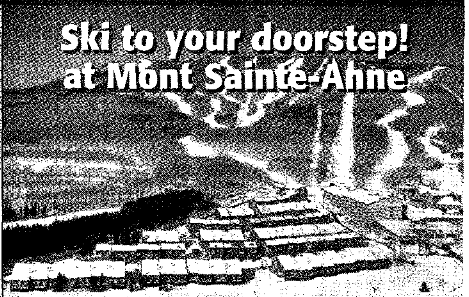

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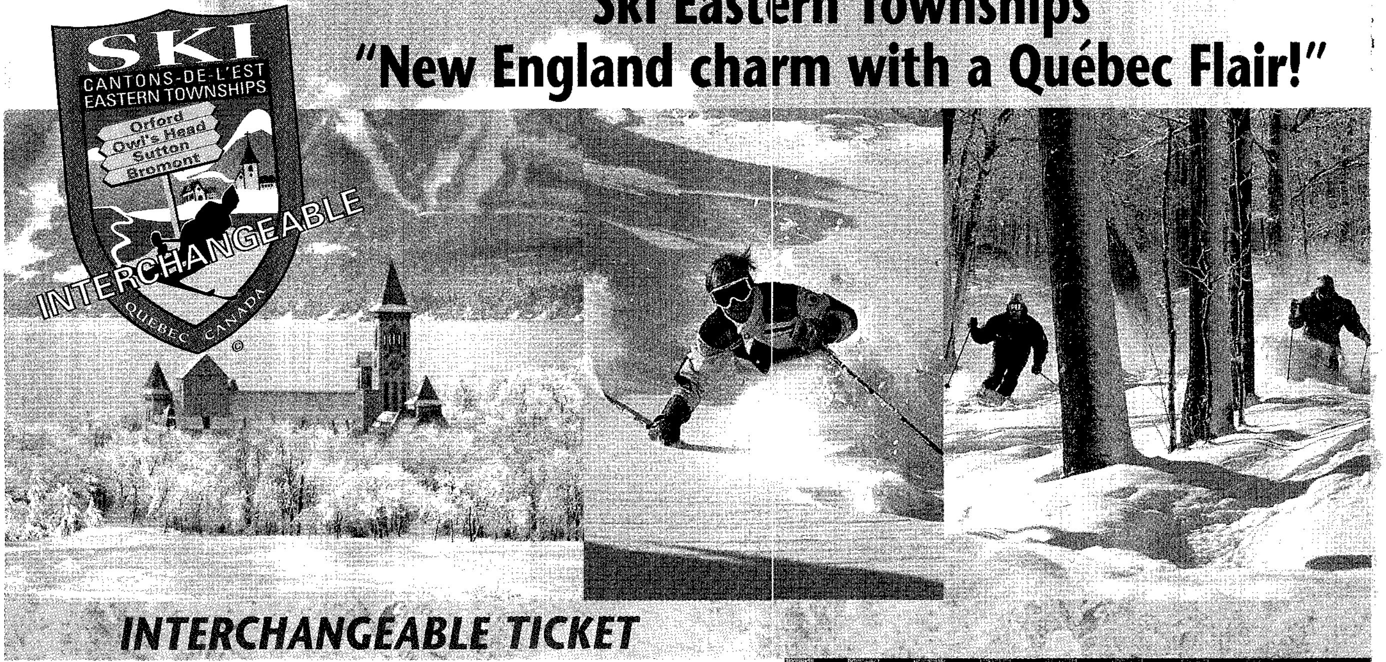
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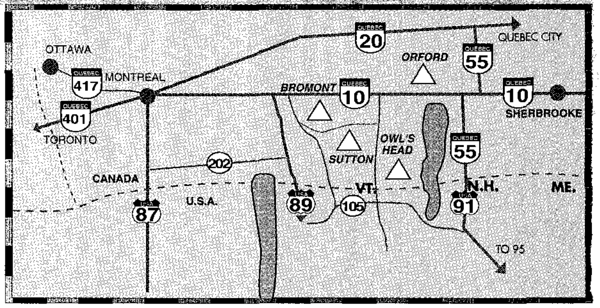
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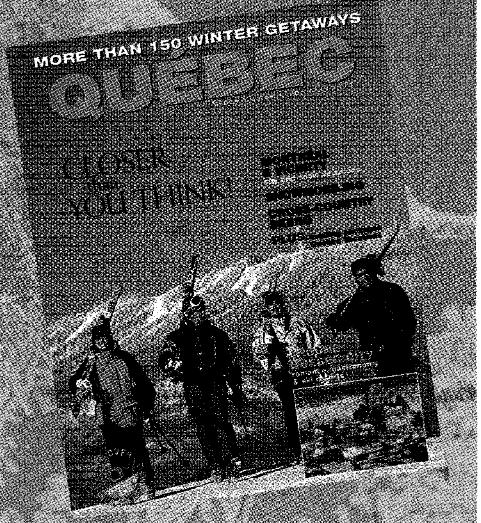

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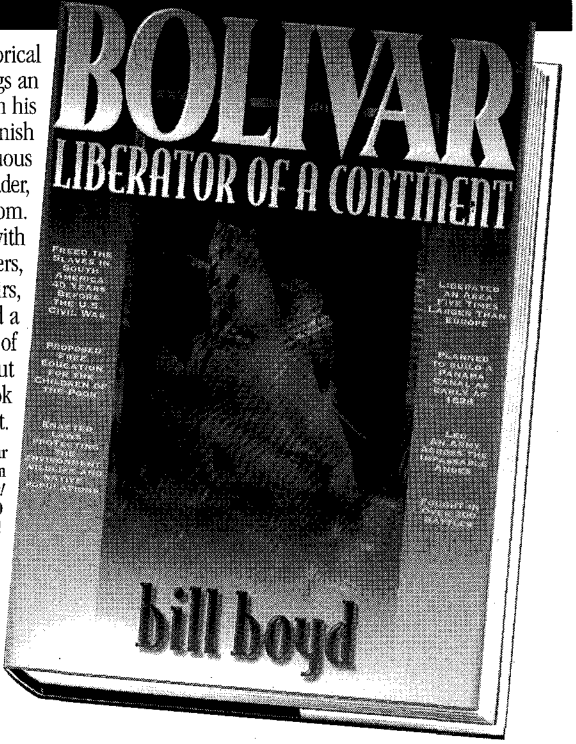
on his personal charm, and now that his business is expanding so fast the charm sometimes flags.

For example, while Fekkai was cutting my hair this spring, in his new Los Angeles salon, he took at least three calls on his cell phone and also dashed off several times to deal with other business matters. His beauty advice seemed perfunctory, and produced more anxiety than confidence. Once I'd been seated in the chair, he studied my hair in the mirror, tousled it to one side and then to the other, and announced, "I would not worry about your gray." (Until then, I never had.) "I love your natural color," he continued, staring unhappily at some highlights that my regular stylist had recently applied. "I see what you were trying to do." He quickly diagnosed my hair as dry and recommended a few of his products. Then he grasped my shoulders urgently and stared at my earlobes. "The thing I want to tell you," he said. "Your earrings—too long for your style."

The actual haircut took about eight minutes, between interruptions. "Simple!" he pronounced, when it was done. "Natural!" (These two words encapsulate the Fekkai aesthetic, though many of his most powerful clients return to have their hair professionally styled several times a week.) But the next morning my hair lay completely slack, despite a blow-dry lesson that I'd received the day before, and nothing but another cut, by a less famous stylist, could restore it to life. I ended up feeling foolish, because, like the women who wait several months for an appointment with Fekkai, and pay more than five hundred dollars for cut, color, and tips (my session was free), I had dared to hope that he would work magic on my self-image. Maybe he was just distracted that day. It wasn't the first time I'd had a bad haircut, but it was so much more of a letdown to get one from the Master. "It's like Wolfgang Puck—people want to see him in his chef's whites," Linda Wells, the editor of *Allure,* explained to me. "Americans want someone to be a small-time craftsman at the same time they want him to be a great big phenomenon."

The strain of trying to do both things is particularly evident at Frédéric Fekkai Beauté de Provence, the new salon and spa that Fekkai has created in the Chanel Building, on East Fifty-seventh



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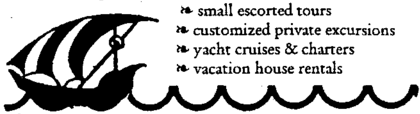

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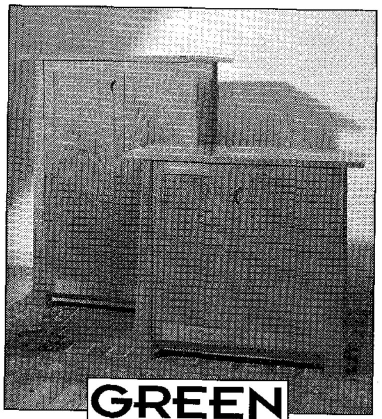

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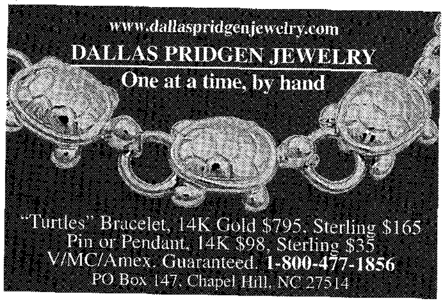

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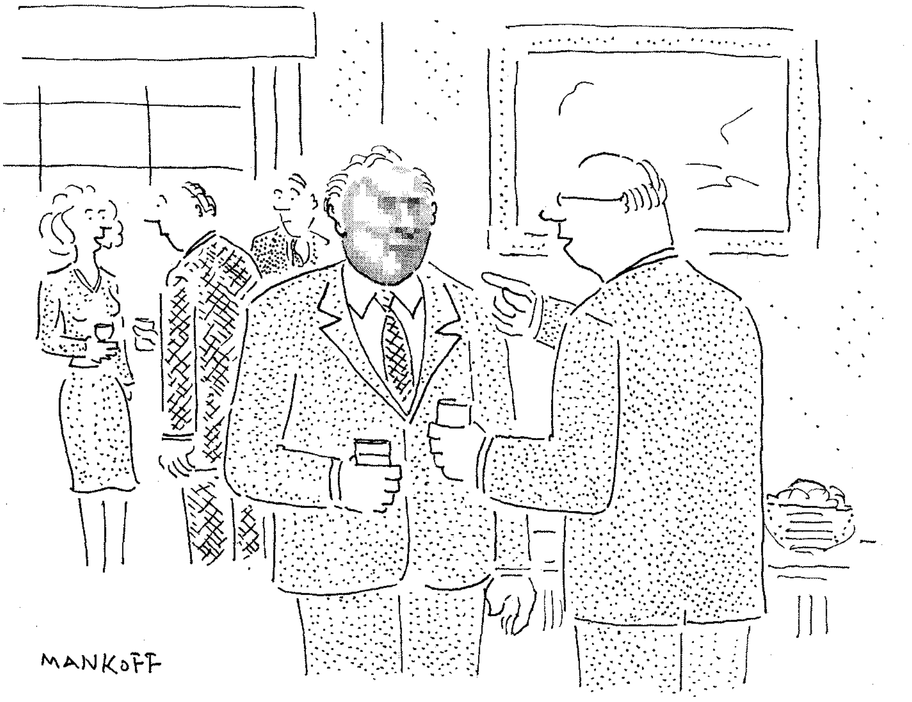
Street. The décor evokes the languid pleasures of Provence, with an eighteenth-century stone fountain in the reception area, terra-cotta floors, and muted-pastel walls. But there is no hiding the fact that the salon, which occupies five floors, is also a beauty factory. A bevy of uniformed cashiers stand tensely behind computer terminals, and customers rush to and fro, often galloping up the fire stairs to beat the elevator for services on a higher floor. The décor may say "Relax," but the atmosphere says "Get moving," which has Fekkai's longtime clients grumbling that the new salon is too "bus stationy."

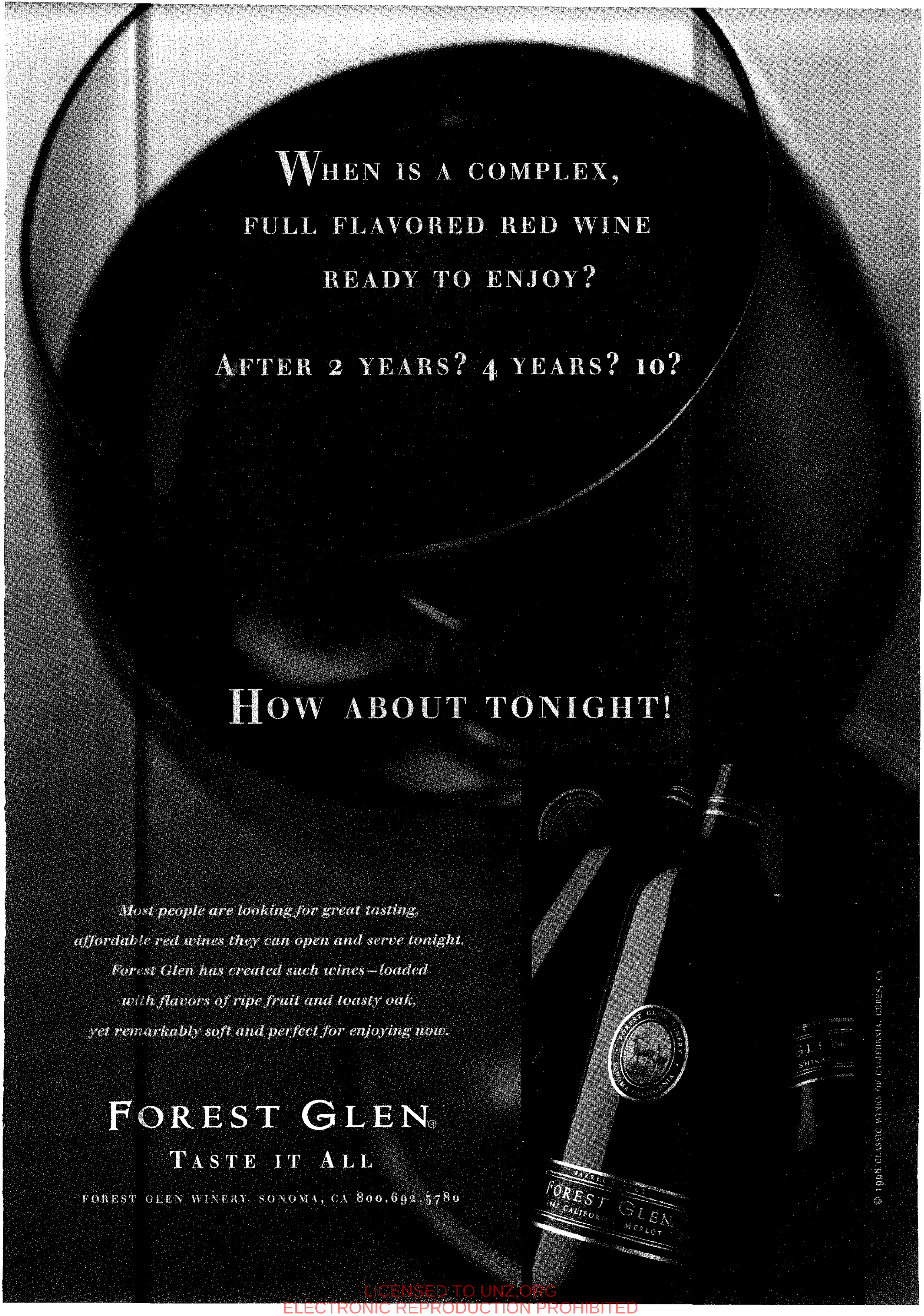
IN the nineteen-sixties, another handsome young hairdresser with a foreign accent built a hair-style innovation into a beauty empire. His name was Vidal Sassoon, his accent was British, and the new look he exploited was "wash-and-wear hair." By putting the shape into the cut, and not into the set, Sassoon liberated women from weekly visits to the beauty parlor. He opened fourteen salons and a string of training schools, and developed his own products for every phase of this new hair-care regimen: the shampoo, the cream rinse, the blow-dryer, and the brush. "The logical step in building a name is putting it to use in whatever area you think will be beneficial," says Sassoon, who eventually sold the business.

Many hairdressers have sought to imitate Sassoon's success, but Fekkai is the first to move beyond hair products. "Today it's an ensemble, it's not just a haircut," he pronounces. He is pushing what he calls a Total Look, by which he means giving people a consistent style from head to toe. The professional élite that has emerged at the end of the twentieth century, Michael Solomon, a professor of consumer behavior at Auburn University, notes, "doesn't know how to be rich." Successful women are not sure how to style themselves for all their daily roles—sex object, soccer mom, C.E.O.—in a way that distinguishes them from those less fortunate. They need what Professor Solomon calls a "cultural editor," along the lines of Ralph Lauren, Martha Stewart, or Frédéric Fekkai. "I dress people so well," Fekkai says. "I tell men not to put boots with dress pants. I tell women when to get a pair of earrings, or a watch, or a tank top. It's so powerful. I've got some clients who are smart, just brilliant, but today, because of what I've done for them, they have a better position in their work. They didn't have the look for their level."

In 1989, Fekkai was hired to run the salon at Bergdorf Goodman, and he seemed to understand instinctively the needs and aspirations of what he liked



"Hey, didn't I just see you on Court TV?"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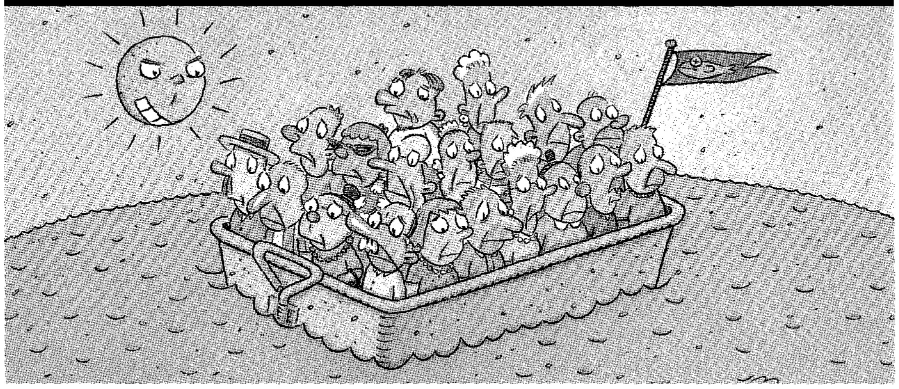

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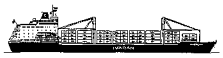

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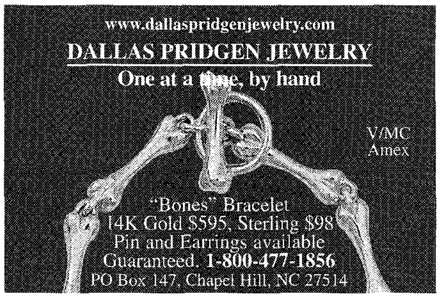

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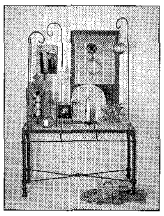

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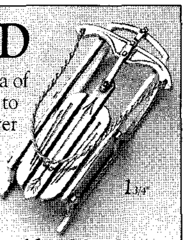

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to call the *exécutive.* She was a woman approaching a certain age, with lots of money but very little time, who was determined to look young, hip, and polished—not prosperous in a matronly, old-fashioned way. While Old Guard stylists such as Kenneth catered to the ladies who lunch, and flashy new stars like Oribe cultivated models, Fekkai attracted the business class, installing phones and faxes near each chair. He set the price of his own haircuts high enough to make them a luxury item but, at the same time, created a hierarchy of less expensive stylists, so that a junior *exécutive* could afford a bit of the Fekkai mystique. Drawing on lessons he had learned in France as a protégé of Bruno Pittini, the international creative director of the Jacques Dessange chain (Pittini invented Brigitte Bardot's topknot—the hairdressing equivalent of curing cancer), Fekkai professionalized a traditionally freewheeling business. He instituted mandatory after-hours training and a long list of house rules.

Within two years, revenues at the Bergdorf salon had risen from one and a half million dollars to seven million dollars. But the environment there wasn't always a happy one. His top stylists, who were soon making several hundred thousand dollars a year, began to chafe under the salon's many rules and threatened to defect, taking clients with them. (In 1997, Fekkai filed a two-million-dollar lawsuit against ten former employees, but he later settled the case.) After Fekkai bought the salon, in 1990, he began exploring other business opportunities. He talked to L'Oreal and Revlon, but nothing seemed quite right: he refused to compromise quality by franchising the salon, and he didn't want his name on drugstore shelves.

Eventually, word reached Ari Kopelman, the C.E.O. of Chanel, that Fekkai was restless. Chanel had a looming problem of its own. Its major rival, Estée Lauder, had modernized very effectively. While lines such as Clinique and Prescriptives remained popular with middle-aged baby boomers, Lauder had developed or bought an array of beauty products for younger customers: Trish McEvoy (understated sophistication), Origins (nineties natural), Aveda (spiritual, and heavy on hair care), and MAC

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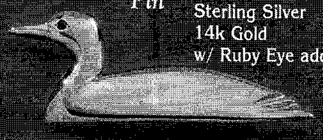

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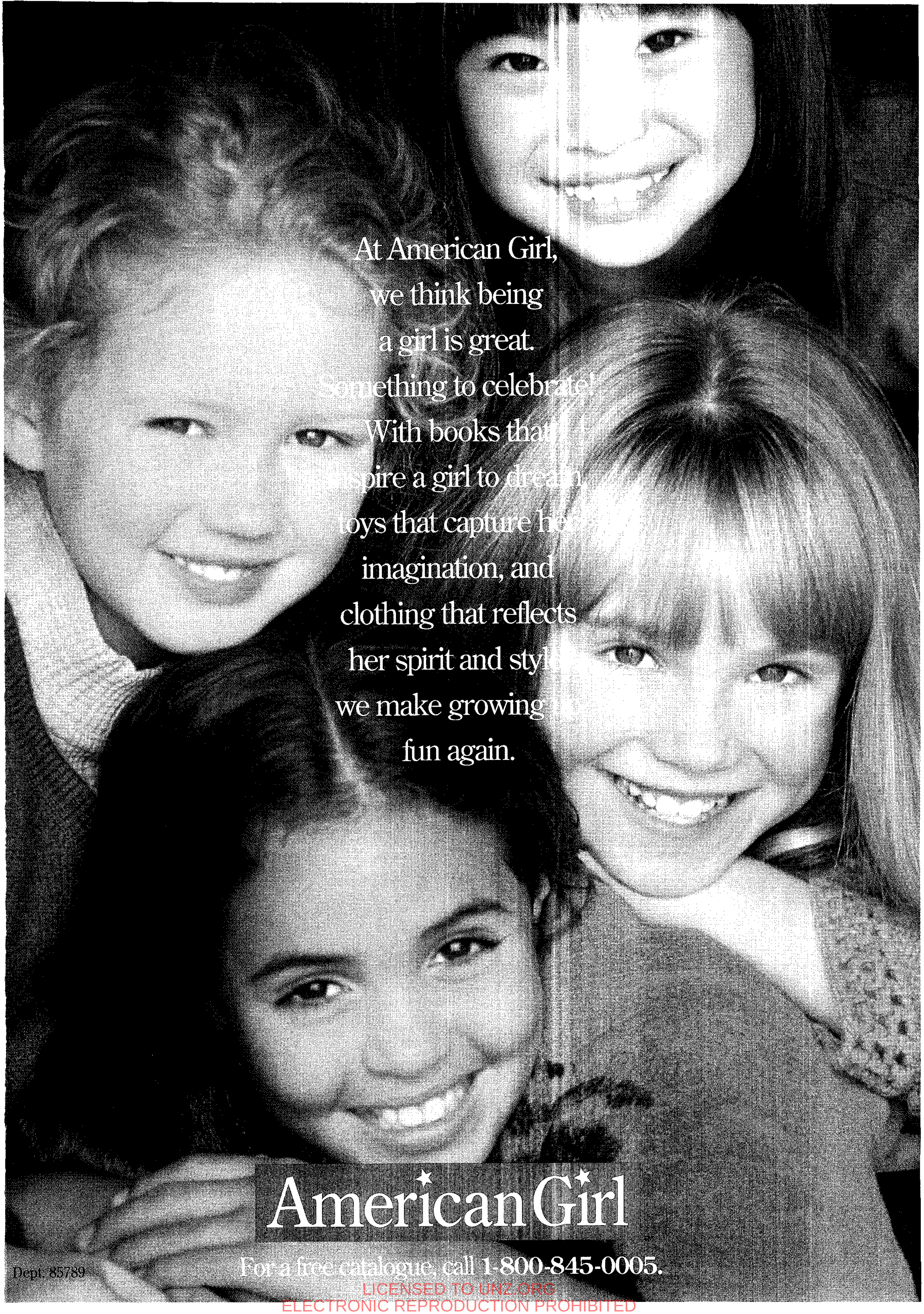
(edgy, and its public face was the transvestite RuPaul). Chanel had a reputation for brilliant marketing—it had managed to maintain its luxury image over decades while diversifying all the way down to key chains—but there was a sense within the company and within the beauty industry that the brand needed freshening.

In 1983, Chanel had brought in Karl Lagerfeld to update its couture and ready-to-wear lines. Then, in 1992, Kopelman agreed to back Isaac Mizrahi, a young designer who, like Fekkai, had become a darling of the New York beauty world. (That venture ended early this month: Mizrahi closed down after three years of disappointing sales.) Fekkai offered another opportunity to put a younger, vaguely multicultural gloss on the Chanel image. Kopelman's original idea was to invite Fekkai to establish a salon in the Chanel Building and launch a modest line of hair-care products. But that was before he met Fekkai. "When he walks in and flashes that smile and starts talking, he's hypnotic," says Kopelman, an unpretentious man with glasses and a disappearing hairline who resembles an exceedingly well dressed college professor. Fekkai sold Kopelman his Total Look. "Since he was doing this on an informal basis at Bergdorf's, we thought, Why not formalize it in the same way that Ralph Lauren went from neckties to sheets?" says Kopelman, who was not bothered by Fekkai's lack of design experience. "I think of Frédéric not as a hairdresser but as a taste maven of sorts."

Though neither Chanel nor Fekkai will comment on the financial terms of their joint venture, sources close to the deal estimate that Chanel has invested roughly twenty million dollars. Five million went immediately into the creation of the New York salon; another five million went into the Los Angeles salon, on Rodeo Drive, in Beverly Hills. (Fekkai is believed to own between fifteen and twenty per cent of the new company, and he earns royalties for the use of his name.)

To begin creating a corporate identity for the company, in June of 1995 Michelle Taylor, a Chanel executive who became a senior vice-president of Frédéric Fekkai (Fekkai is the C.E.O.), went to Provence. Most people picture the South of France as a dreamy place with good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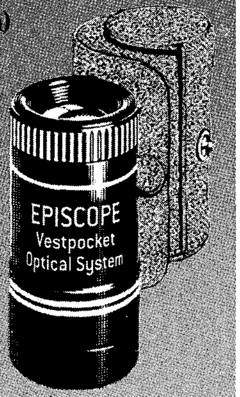

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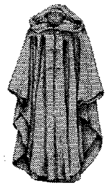

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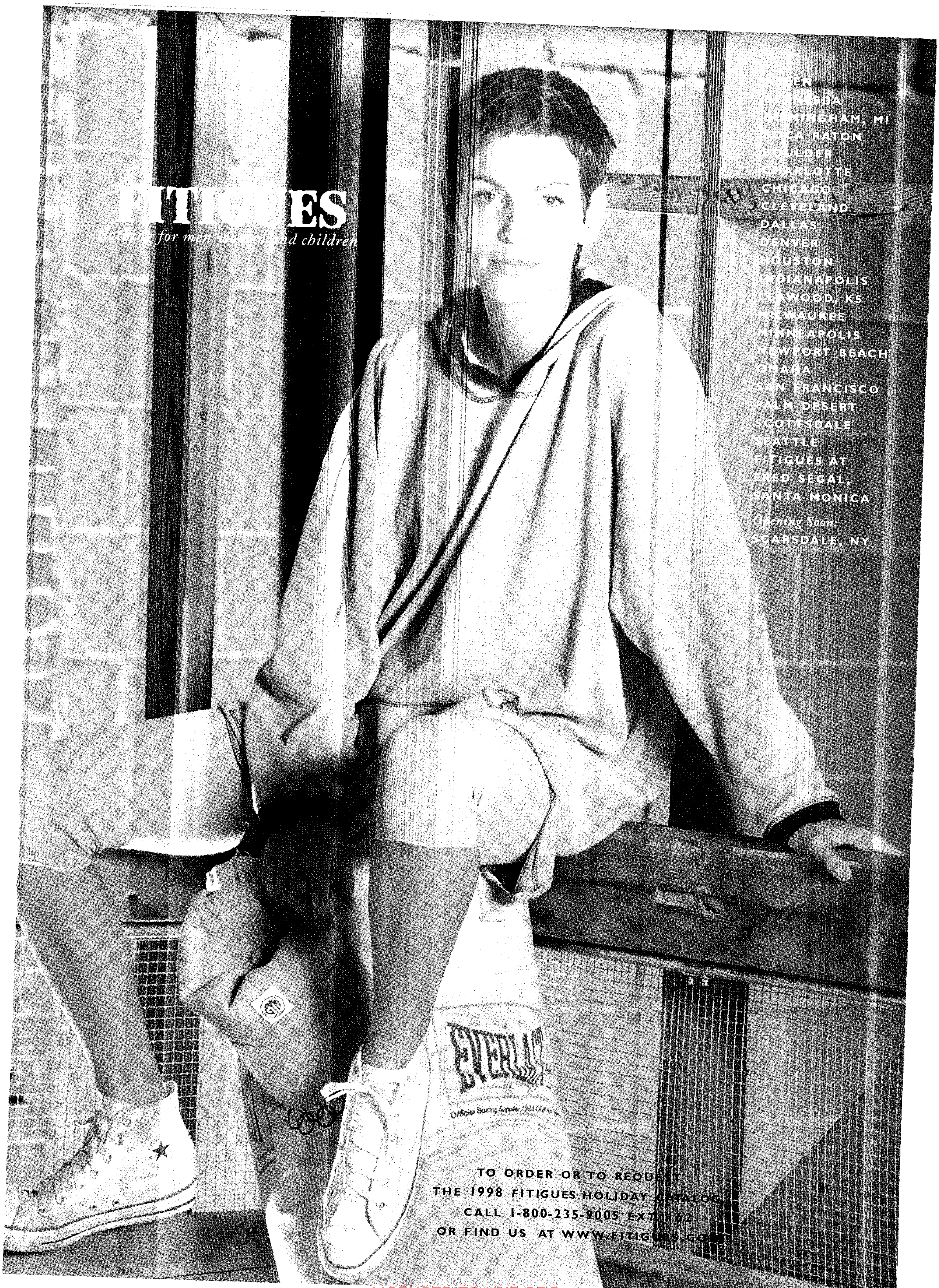
wine, good food, lavender-scented hills, and a quaint, charming populace. But Aix-en-Provence, the university town where Fekkai spent his childhood, as the son of a small businessman, is frequented by wealthy, cultivated Parisians with excruciatingly precise preferences in cuisine, in fabric, in architecture, in ideas. Fekkai's Provence is not the folksy Provence, Taylor explains—"not Pierre Deux, not Souleido"—but discerning Provence. "There is more of the Italian influence," she says. Hence the various creams in the new line are wrapped in Provençal-like craft paper but are labelled in an elegant eighteenth-century script. The hair ornaments are made of leather and metal—not to be confused in any way with the plastic clips available in ordinary department stores.

So much of Chanel's initial investment went into product development, however, that there was very little left for advertising and promotion this year. So it's fortunate for Fekkai that a well-connected client like Lynn Wyatt gave an intimate dinner party for him this summer in her home town. Fekkai also used the market clout of Chanel to commandeer premium space in stores—by the elevators at Saks in New York, on the path between the escalator and the valet-parking exit at Neiman Marcus in Houston—because, in the words of one luxury retailer, "Chanel can do whatever they want, whenever they want."

It is too early to judge the success of Fekkai's new business. The challenge in selling luxury goods is always to maintain the air of glamour and exclusivity while reaching a broader market. Beauté de Provence, for instance, has already lost some of its glossy image, even though Fekkai says it is breaking earnings records. Although many of Fekkai's personal hair clients—the television personalities and the publishing executives—remain loyal to him, the Manhattan crowd that sets style trends is moving on: to Garren, an eighties hair star making a comeback, or to small salons run by Fekkai defectors, or to hairdressers who make house calls. (Big salons are out, *Vogue* declared last month; intimate home visits are in.)

The accessories and makeup businesses can be even more chimerical. Fekkai's hair bands and clips appear to be an instant hit in at least one Texas



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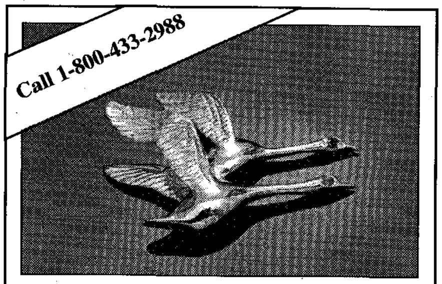

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Neiman Marcus store, but there isn't much traffic at the cosmetic counters. Michelle Taylor says that the makeup line is selling as well as Trish McEvoy and Bobbie Brown did initially, but a rival makeup executive claims that those brands entered the market far more modestly.

Fekkai is making the time to get behind the counter in several cities, so that he can dispense style advice along with the handbags and three-hundred-dollar wool shawls. When he recently appeared at Saks Fifth Avenue in Chevy Chase, Maryland, the store sold more accessories than it had sold at any previous trunk show. "He's very charming, which is half the battle sometimes," says Wendy Hessen, the accessories editor of *Women's Wear Daily* and *W.* "Fekkai has a better chance than a lot of people, but the accessories business is like the fashion business: 'What have you done lately?' "

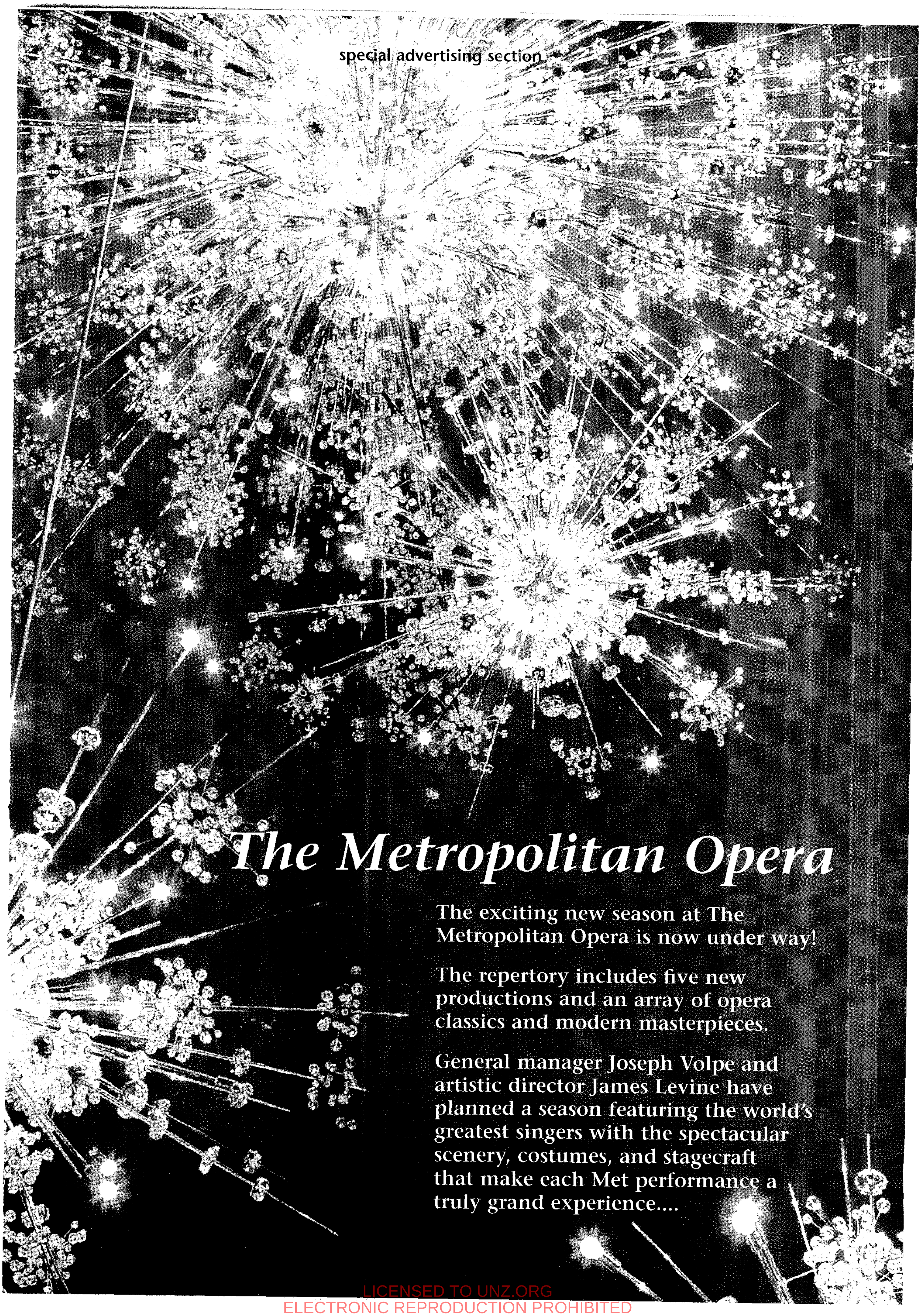
"What makes this fun is that it really is a venture-capital deal," Kopelman says. "It's a startup. If you go too far too fast, you end up off course." Chanel's optimistic yet cautious approach to this new franchise is apparent in the Fekkai boutique that will open in New York next month, during Fashion Week. The Madison Avenue location, within blocks of Armani and Calvin Klein, is de-luxe. Yet the store is *tiny*—just three hundred and fifty square feet—which will presumably make it easier to reach the industry standard of a thousand dollars per square foot in annual sales.

As recently as the fifties, hairdressers were figures of gentle ridicule. Since then, their status and image have steadily improved, along with the status and power of women. But Fekkai is the first to test the proposition that the cachet of a hair salon can be translated into other beauty markets. In rare moments, he shows the strain. After a lunch for fashion editors in Los Angeles, he turned to me and said, "You give them free sunglasses, and you never know." ♦

THE CLOUDED CRYSTAL BALL

[*W. H. Auden in the March 6, 1954, issue of The New Yorker*]

It is, probably, already too late to hope that someone will write a definitive history of Bloomsbury, that fascinating cultural milieu which formed itself around 1910, exercised its greatest influence during the twenties, and came to an end with the death of Virginia Woolf.



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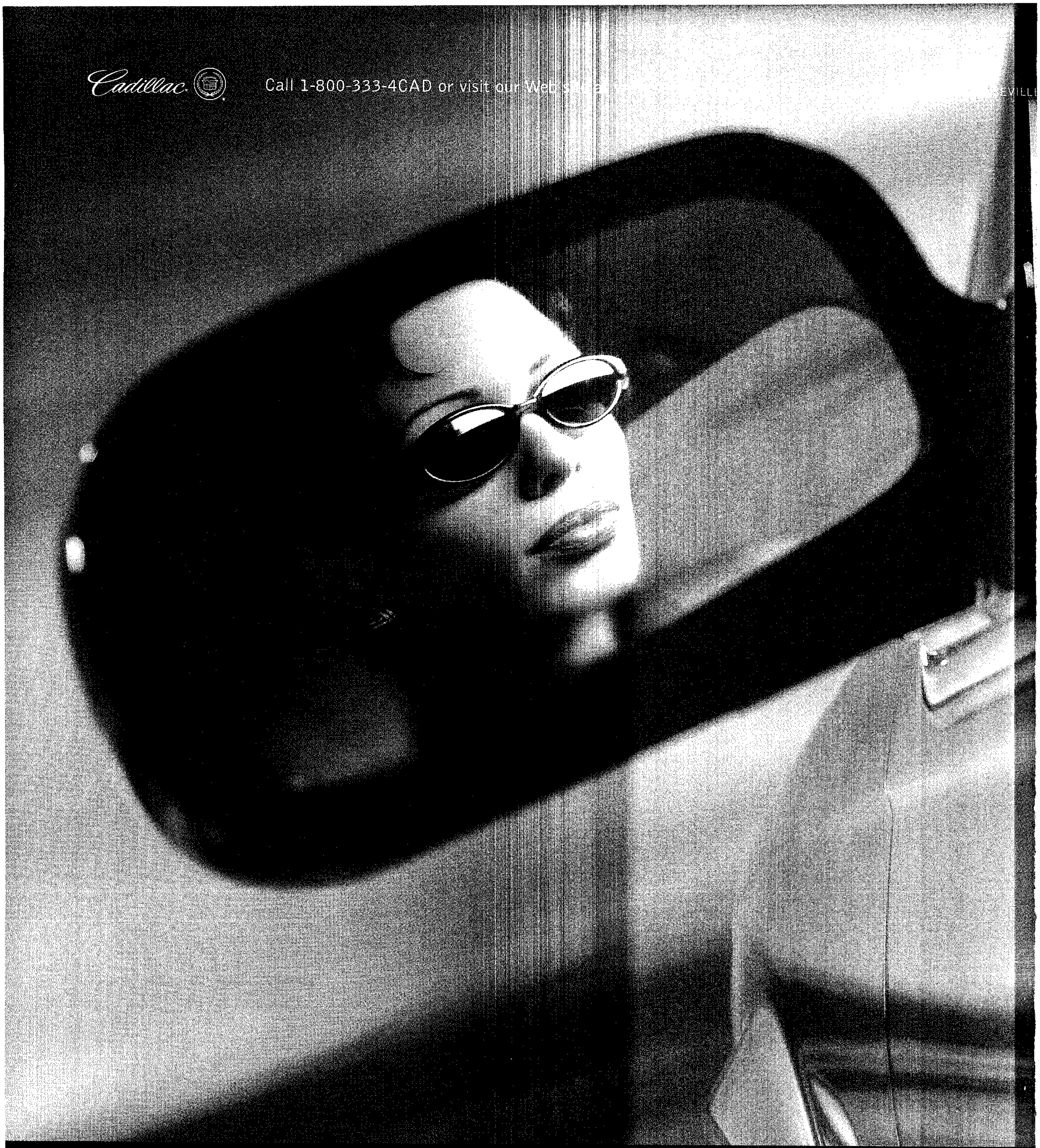
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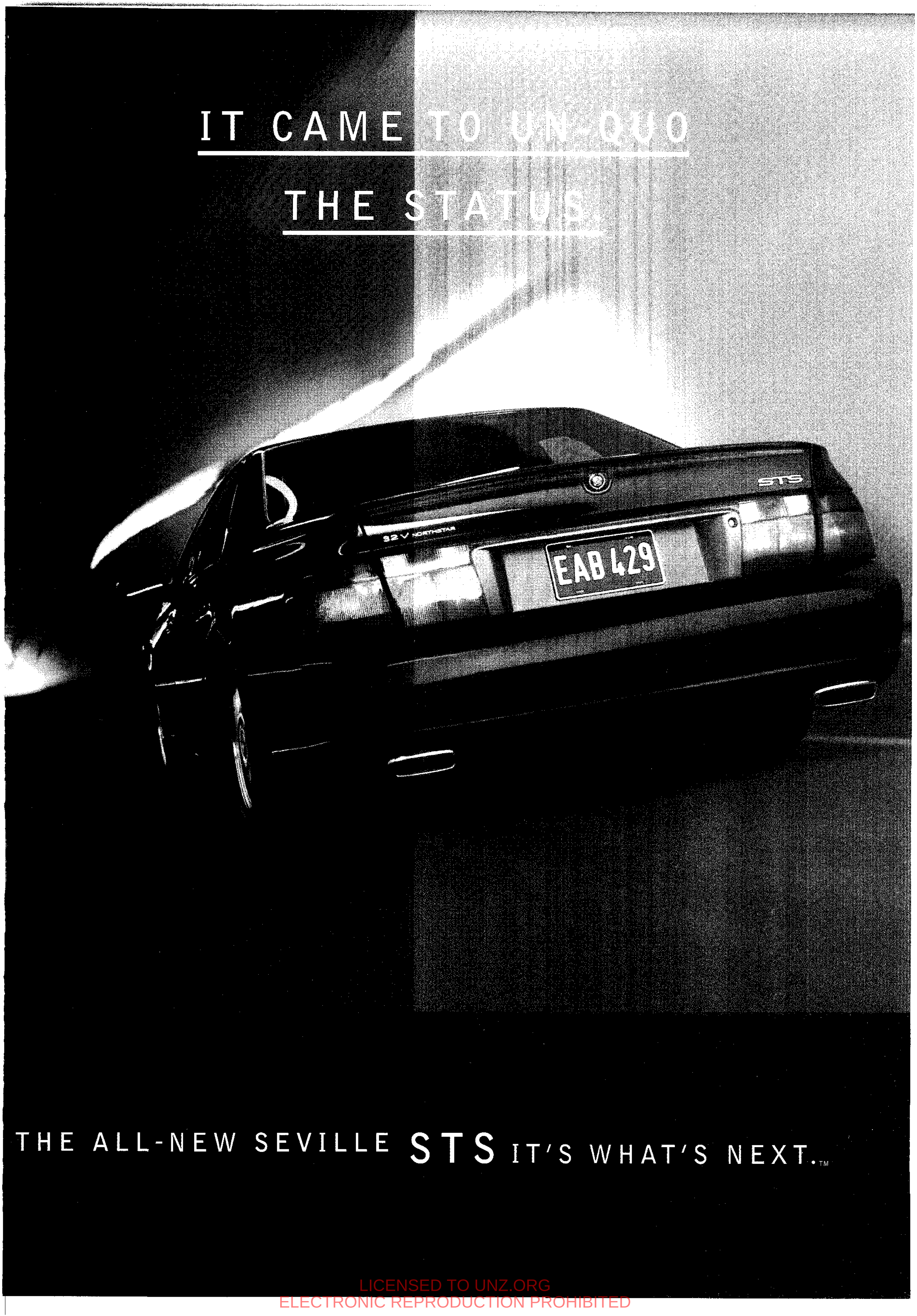
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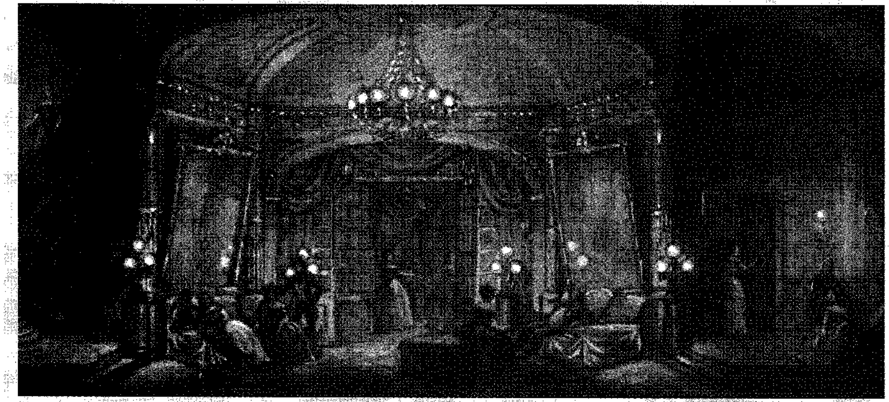

La Traviata sketch for Act I by Franco Zeffirelli

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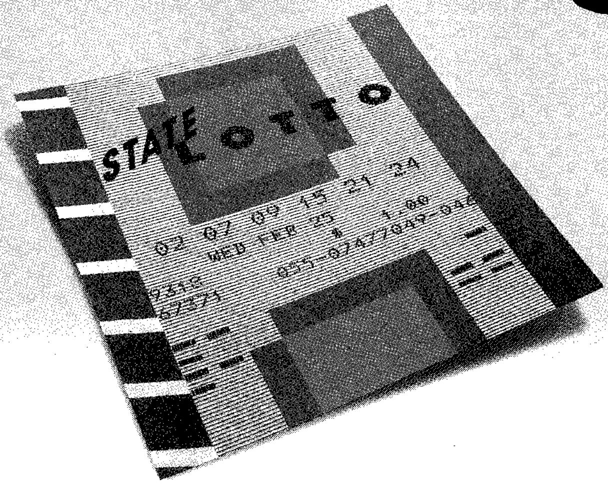

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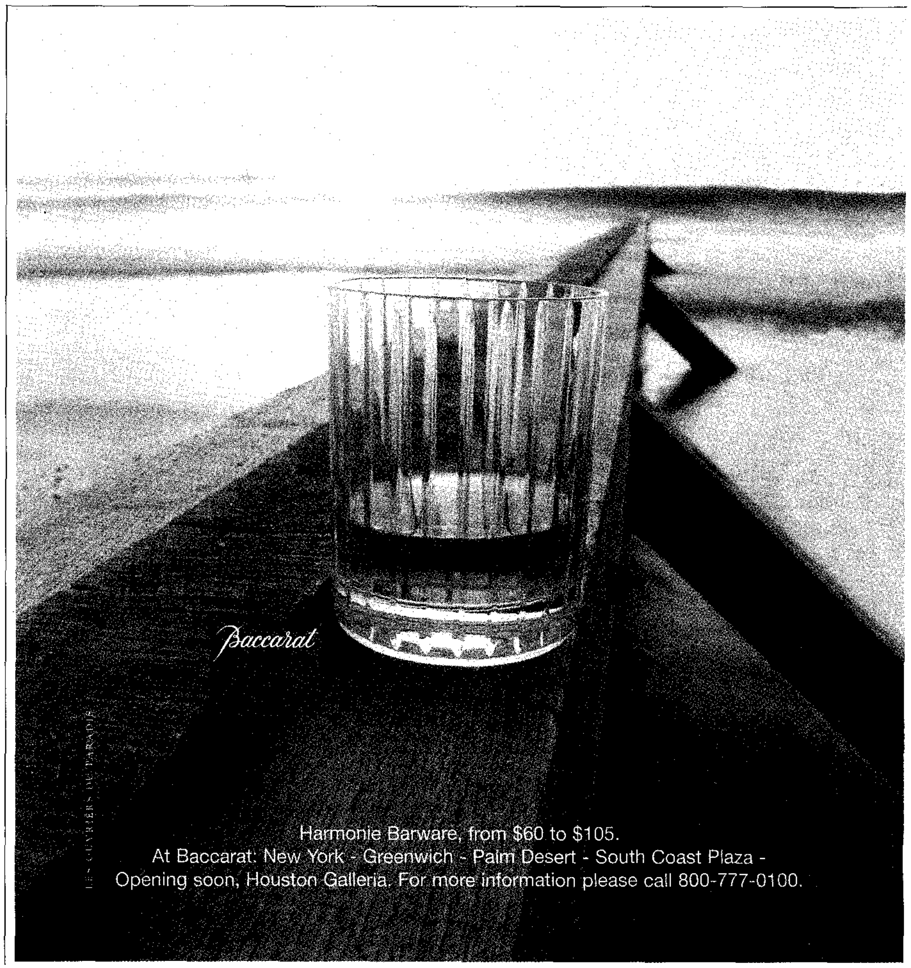

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THE POLITICAL SCENE

AFTER ELVIS

Is there a future for a politician whose ideas are almost as big as his ambitions?

BY LOUIS MENAND

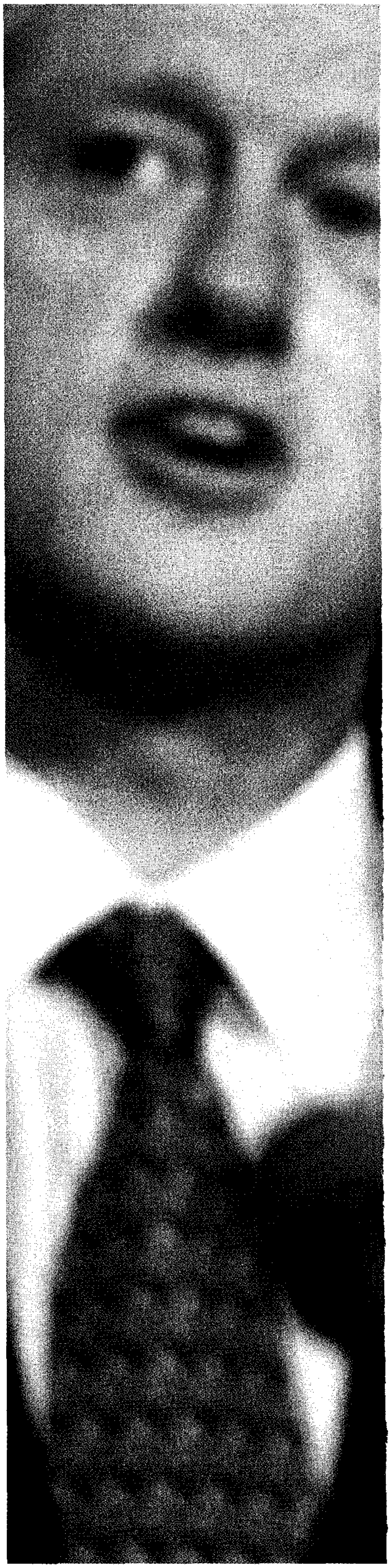
In the summer of 1992, after he was assured of the Democratic nomination for President, Bill Clinton took a room at the Capitol Hilton, in Washington, and set about interviewing potential running mates. Al Gore was then in his second term as a senator from Tennessee. Gore had run for the Democratic Presidential nomination himself four years earlier, on a platform (boiled down to its crudest political elements) of electability. The basic argument of his campaign was that a Democrat could not win the Presidency unless he was a white Southerner. Gore lost the nomination, but he did not lose the argument. George Bush, a Connecticut Yankee, defeated Michael Dukakis, the governor of Massachusetts, by running as a Texan. The lesson was not lost on the Democrats. Bill Clinton rose from the ashes of Michael Dukakis.

According to the account in Bob Woodward's "The Agenda," Gore's Vice-Presidential interview lasted three hours. Afterward, Clinton told his staff that he was pleased by their compatibility and was inclined to offer Gore the spot. In the context of a transaction usually governed by the political consideration known as "balance," this was not the obvious choice. Putting Gore on the ticket, the Bush campaign would say when the selection was announced, strengthened Clinton's chances in Arkansas. Why Gore? one of Clinton's advisers, Paul Begala, asked him. "I could die, that's why," Clinton said.

Well, that was one possibility. It has become a little hard to remember, thanks to the short-term, not to say the micro-term, mind-set of his Administration, in which every movement seems to be scripted by the morning's poll results, that Clinton ran for the Presidency with the intention of doing something more than simply clinging to the office. But he did. He wished to change the DNA of the Democratic Party, to shed its associations with big government, interest-group politics, and agnosticism about "values." And in this matter he and Gore thought exactly alike. Their shared commitment to genetic engineering had led them, long before that summer, to enter into a mutual nonaggression pact. Clinton remained neutral in the 1988 primaries to help Gore's chances against Dukakis, and, according to Woodward, Clinton would have stayed out of the 1992 primaries as well if Gore had decided to run. In 1989, though, Gore's son was struck by a car and almost killed; the event led to a period of intense family introspection, and Gore was still not ready, three years later, to take on a national campaign. The door was opened for Clinton, and he walked through like a conqueror.

By choosing Gore as his running mate in 1992—by, in effect, doubling the Southern element of his candidacy—Clinton was casting himself off from the party of George McGovern, Walter Mondale, and Mario Cuomo. He was placing all his chips on the future. And he won the bet. The selection of Gore gave the campaign a huge bounce in the polls coming out of the Convention, and it never looked back. As the Bush people had predicted, Gore helped deliver Arkansas; he also helped deliver California and Michigan. And in the end the McGovernites went along, too; after all, they had no place else to go.

In short, Gore has always been Clinton's designated successor. He is the ideological heir, the legacy bearer, the anointed's anointed. "I could die": if anything were to happen to Clinton, the genetic code would not be lost. Gore would know what to do. And if nothing happened to Clinton, if Clinton made it through his term of office, then Gore would carry on the



From the beginning, Al Gore has been B

CONTACT PRESS IMAGES

linton's legacy bearer, his designated successor. Now he has to be wondering what that legacy is worth. Photograph by David Burnett.

work for another eight years, and the Democratic Party would be saved for a whole generation. In accepting the Vice-Presidential nomination at the 1992 Convention, Gore told the delegates that he finally had the job of his dreams: he was the warmup act for Elvis. In his own mind, he must have been imagining the day when it would be said that Elvis had been the warmup act for Al Gore.

Al and Tipper Gore as Frankenstein's monster and the Bride of Frankenstein at their annual Halloween party, in 1994.

DAVID BURNETT/CONTACT PRESS IMAGES

Mortality does not seem to be the gravest threat right now to the grand design of Clinton and Gore. The gravest threat is what it has always been: Clinton. The trouble with Clinton is that he is, in the considered and no doubt heartfelt words of George Bush, a bullshit artist. A bullshit artist is not the same thing as a liar (though this may seem like the kind of distinction a bullshit artist would make). Clinton always sounds like he is trying to please everyone because he *is* always trying to please everyone. That is the basis of his approach to government. And since he can't always please everyone he often finds himself obliged to warm the truth a little. This is not because he wishes to deceive you; it's because he wants you to know that his heart is in the right place. He cannot bear to be the bringer of bad news—which is why it is fully believable that he did not tell his wife the truth about Monica Lewinsky (or, for that matter, tell Monica Lewinsky the truth about his wife). He thinks that even though the situation may not be one hundred per cent copacetic right this minute, everything will be fine in the long run, so why cause unnecessary pain? Monica will be happy with her new job at *George*, where she will find another celebrity to flash her underwear at and forget all about Bill; Bill will spend more time with Hillary; Ken will self-destruct. He truly is the man from Hope.

It is the sour and rather pathetic irony of his career that Clinton is now in the position of having to defend himself against the charge that he is a liar by arguing that he is only a bullshit artist. He wasn't good (to paraphrase Lyle Lovett), but he had good intentions. The success of this argument will be politically determined. From the perspective of the grand design, though, the danger is that Clinton's personal weakness, his tendency to let his intentions vouch for his actions, will discredit his politics, which are the politics of compromise and coalition-building. Reaching out will come to seem indistinguishable from pandering, and the so-called Third Way—the path, which Clinton is credited with blazing and which most of Europe is now supposed to be trying to follow, between welfare-state liberalism and free-market conservatism—will look like an empty formula for political survival. And if Clinton goes down, can Gore rise from *his* ashes?

ONE morning in late September, a few days after the Monday on which the House Judiciary Committee had made the nation a Rosh Hashanah gift of Clinton's grand-jury testimony, I went to the White House to talk to a man now contemplating the fact that he was about to be handed, and possibly sooner rather than later, an unpleasantly limp baton.

The Vice-President's office shares a reception area with the President's, and on this morning members of the Congressional Black Caucus, led by Maxine Waters, were arriving to meet with Clinton. The Black Caucus had recently appointed itself the fairness referee in the President's impending struggle with Congress, and if they had been wearing mood badges that morning every badge would have displayed the same message: Comfort Level Extremely High. The African-American public is almost united in its contempt for the charges Starr chose to bring against the President, and this has put the black congressional leadership in the unusual position of being able to take a stand on principle without giving up an inch of political ground. If the President pulls through, they will have earned many favors. If he falls, they will be there to pick up some of the pieces. Charles Rangel, the longtime Harlem congressman who sat on the House Judiciary Committee that voted articles of impeachment against Richard Nixon, was slapping backs and growling with genial pleasure, like a politician inside his own local clubhouse. The thought occurred that Charles Rangel always gives the impression of a politician inside his own local clubhouse. But the manner seemed to fit the moment.

Several nights earlier, Gore had spoken at a black-tie dinner sponsored by the Congressional Black Caucus, and I had watched him on C-SPAN, doing some homework on the famously inscrutable Gore body language. He has, as a public speaker, only two dials on the console: speed and volume. To convey gravity, he slows down; to convey urgency, he gets louder. Clinton purrs; Gore declaims.

In his address to the Black Caucus, he ended by listing, at about volume nine, the positions to which Clinton has appointed African-Americans during his Administration. It was, indeed, a long and impressive list, and it accomplished the desired end of bringing the audience to their feet. When Clinton's turn at the podium came, he was, by comparison, muted, long-winded, and a little dry, as though the only thing on the mind of everyone in the room must be the pros and cons of pending empowerment-zone legislation. "Just doing the job the American people elected me to do" was the message implied by the performance. One could see the division of labor for the mid-term campaign ahead.

Once we were inside the Vice-President's office and the door was closed, the world of the Black Caucus and the Starr report seemed shut out. The Vice-President said that he was glad to have the chance to discuss serious subjects; so much of his time was being taken up by what he called "all these political events."

Physically, what strikes you first about Gore is the solidity. He has the frame of an athlete, but the upper body is heavy, and the complexion is unexpectedly pale. The mask is, indeed, a mysterious feature. He inflects with his face, rather than with his voice. He grimaces, and though the effect seems self-conscious, it brings out the athleticism. You see the muscular Gore, the superachiever, the star quarterback who is also captain of the debating team and is invited on Sunday afternoons to have tea with the dean. But in repose the face sometimes goes completely flaccid, the eyes become hooded, and you see the Vulcan side. The light for the hard drive is on, but there is no message on the screen.

Like the face, the manner sends disparate signals. The initial impression is of mildness; the demeanor is formal, the aura is tepid. The system has clearly been designed to avoid wasteful heat loss. The second impression, though, is of stubbornness, and a certain capacity, carefully walled-off, for impatience. This is, after all, a man who ran for President when he was forty, something that requires not only unusual self-discipline (not to mention self-importance) but an unusual willingness to demand self-discipline of others. One imagines that Gore has trained himself so well to live within the narrow definition of what a politician must be today in order to survive that he has little tolerance for ordinary fecklessness. He could, by his appearance, be the head of an extremely prosperous non-denominational church, a man of God who sits on the boards of corporations, and for whom a degree of personal rectitude that would be pretty much inconceivable for most of us is just part of the job description. When I explained that my assignment was to capture the essence of his thought, the Vice-President laughed self-deprecatingly. "I wish you luck," he said. But he did not seem displeased.

Still, I said, I wanted to know his answer to a political question first: Why has the Clinton-Gore Administration been the object of so much animosity? It is, after all, basically a centrist, pro-business, pro-defense Administration; it adopted a Republican welfare plan and it balanced the budget without losing the support of traditional Democratic constituencies. These were precisely the policies the new genome was supposed to produce. But the halo of electability had not been transformed into a halo of leadership ability. The Whitewater story broke in the *Times* even before Clinton had taken the oath of office, and his Presidency has endured ever since a political and journalistic inquisition the essential effect of which, whatever the justifications, has been to place its legitimacy on permanent probation.

It's true that for people with a reputation for brains the Clintons are amazingly inept at (as editorial writers say) "getting the facts out." They apparently cannot bring themselves to admit that their actions are less than noble, even when their actions, like avoiding the draft or making a quick buck in the commodities market or lying about an affair, are merely human. Since their hearts are in the right place, what does it matter where their hands happen to be? The arrogance is a little exasperating. But politically Clinton is an accommodationist. There is no point of view he cannot share. Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill, he informed the grand jury on August 17th, were both telling the truth. What is there in America that doesn't want to be accommodated?

Gore's answer was striking for its dispassion. After all, the question of whether, if he inherits Clinton's legacy, he will also inherit Clinton's enemies can never be far from his mind. He must, in his man-of-God mode, be distressed at finding his own carefully tended ambitions threatened by the moral negligence of his brother Bill. In his star-quarterback mode, he must be ready to strangle the guy. But he took a very, very long view of the situation.

He began, with great deliberation (throughout our conversation, the speed dial was turned way down), by suggesting two reasons for the present toxicity. The first is political. "I view our efforts as being rooted in a longer and larger Democratic tradition," he said. "Franklin Roosevelt would have recognized the kind of outreach and broad-based coalition-building that we have engaged in. So would John F. Kennedy." In those days, he said, the Democratic Party was the dominant party in America, and that is the party that he and Clinton have been trying to resurrect. "The success of the nineteen-nineties version of the Republican Party," he said, "really depends on a cartoon image of the Democratic Party, rather than on a rebuilding of the Democratic Party at its best." The Republicans understand that if the new DNA takes they are doomed to minority status forever, so they cannot merely oppose Clinton. They must deny him legitimacy.

The other poison, Gore suggested, is cultural. "There is a deep well of cynicism in our culture today," he said. The country has suffered, over the last forty years, "a whole series of body blows to the self-confidence necessary for self-governance." That government doesn't work has become the premise of every political debate, and all the Republicans need to do to discredit the Administration's policies is to drop their bucket into this well.

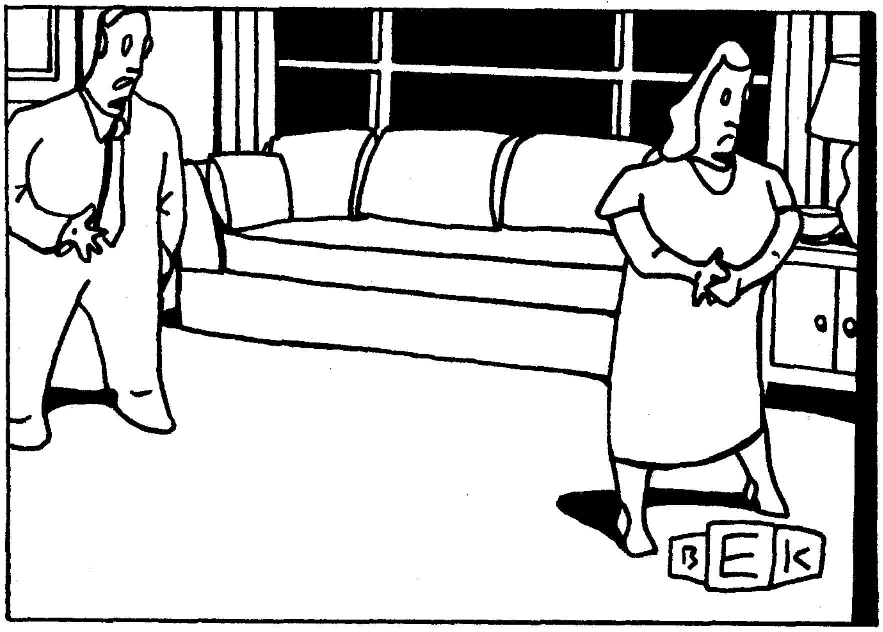
From one point of view, this was an answer from Mars. Surely one did not need to go back forty years to look for the source of cynicism about politics; one could just go back to Monday. If you were writing a book about cynicism, the sentence "It depends on what the meaning of 'is' is" would make an excellent epigraph. Still, Gore's analysis was a reminder that he and Clinton really do think of their mission as a generational one, and that they have to be understood in a generational context.

CLINTON was born in 1946, Gore two years later. Both men essentially started running for office when they were in grade school. This meant that for both of them the romance of politics was represented not by Eugene McCarthy or Tom Hayden or Daniel Cohn-Bendit but by John F. Kennedy. The photograph of Clinton shaking hands with Kennedy in the Rose Garden, taken just a few months before the assassination, is a well-advertised piece of Clintoniana. Gore's connections were much more personal. He is the only son of Senator Al Gore, Sr., and he was introduced to Washington politics as a small child. The Kennedys were not just distant icons; they were, in effect, his dad's business partners. They came to the house.

So Clinton and Gore are not, in the general sense, sixties Democrats; they are, much more specifically, Kennedy Democrats. For all their futurist-sounding talk about the New Democrats and the Third Way (a distinctly Tofflleresque phrase), they are really trying to go backward, to reknit a ravelled tradition. They think that the Democratic Party went down the wrong road after 1963, and persisted on it for almost thirty years. A national majority party transformed itself into a minority party. Nineteen sixty-three to 1992 was the Interregnum. Clinton and Gore mean to be the Restoration.

Like most Kennedy Democrats, Clinton and Gore are defined by their antagonistic relation to Lyndon Johnson. Johnson's Great Society policies, in the view of many Kennedy Democrats, set an impossible standard for the role that government should play in the effort to achieve social progress, and helped to polarize the electorate, to the disadvantage of the Democratic Party. But those policies might have been successfully moderated. Johnson is the villain because of his prosecution of the war in Vietnam. It was the war that brought forth the culture, as Gore had described it to me, of political enmity: it dug the "well of cynicism" about government, and it destroyed the Democratic Party. It gave us Nixon, Watergate, and the degradation of the public-service ideal.

For Clinton and Gore, the issue was not just political; it was personal. To young men who had been grooming themselves for a political career on, as they imagined it, the Kennedy model, Johnson's war presented an impossible dilemma. It forced them to choose between duty to country and duty to conscience, and in the most concrete way: they had to face the draft. The draft was a crisis for both Clinton and Gore, and nothing shows up the contrast in their personalities better than the difference in their strategies for coping with it.



"Of course I care about how you imagined I thought you perceived I wanted you to feel."

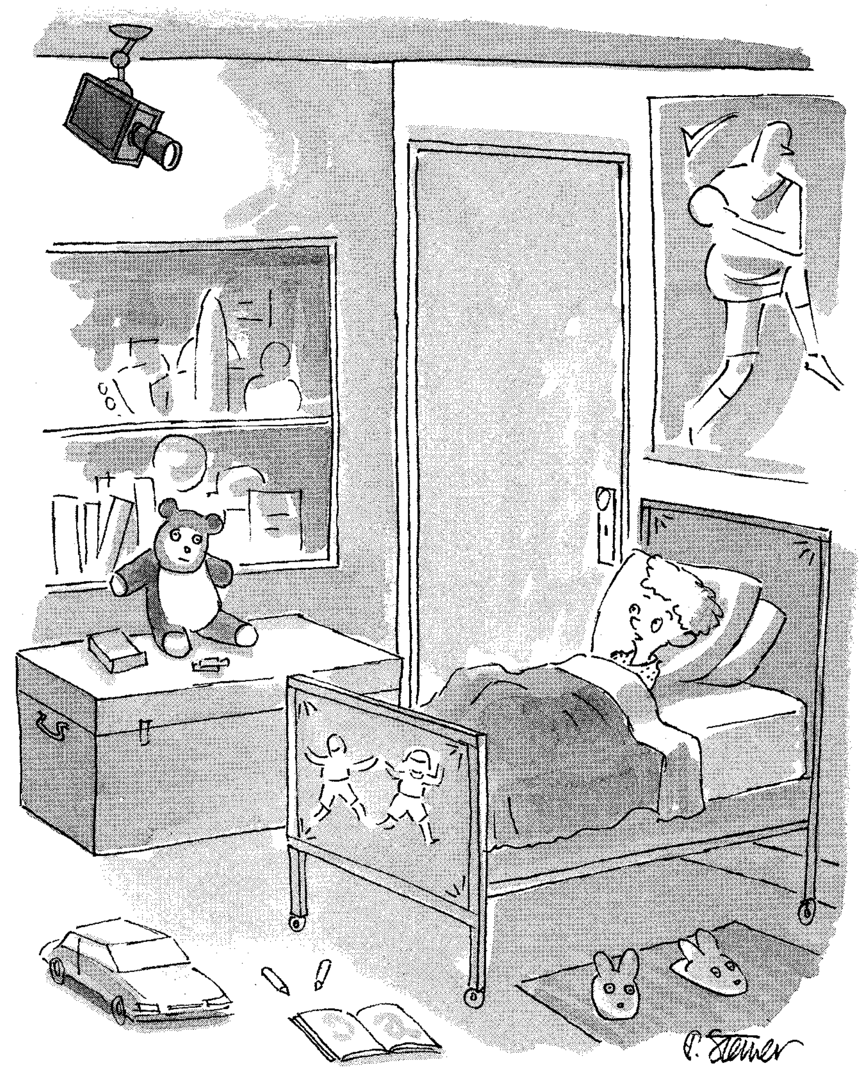
The prospect of the draft drove Clinton almost to despair. It seems to have been the only time in his life, as David Maraniss's biography, "First in His Class," makes clear, when he lost his sense of bearings. A man whose deepest impulse is to demonstrate sympathy for every faction was suddenly obliged to alienate the affections of one faction completely. Clinton responded, typically, by juggling his options—which included a pledge to join the University of Arkansas R.O.T.C.—until the lottery was instituted, and his number placed him outside the pool of probable inductees. His famous letter to the commander of the R.O.T.C. unit, explaining that he was dropping that option, is a classic of Clinton's special art: it manages to praise the honor of those who were willing to fight and the honor of those who refused to fight with equal sincerity. Thomas and Hill were both telling the truth.

Gore's experience was much worse. Al Gore, Sr., had emerged as an opponent of the war (as did Clinton's political mentor, Senator J. William Fulbright, of Arkansas), and when the antiwar insurgency within the Democratic Party failed, with the nomination and defeat of Hubert Humphrey in 1968, Al, Jr., found himself with Clinton's dilemma, but with much higher stakes. His father was up for reëlection in 1970, and an antiwar position was unpopular in Tennessee. If the younger Al refused to serve, he would almost certainly sink his father's candidacy; he also, according to the testimony of some of his Tennessee friends, felt guilty about, in effect, sending another man in his place if he sheltered himself from the draft. So in 1969, after graduating from Harvard, he enlisted. His father lost anyway. It was the end of his political career.

When Gore spoke to me about this period in his life, he emphasized a couple of things besides his father's defeat. One was the shock he had when he returned to Cambridge in 1970, before going overseas, and walked through Harvard Square in his Army uniform. It was, as he put it, "a Ralph Ellison experience." He was sneered at; people shouted epithets. "People I would have identified as those I agreed with on the way we saw the world all of a sudden, because my hair was in a buzz cut and I was in a uniform—it made all the difference in the world to them. Of course, it seems painfully obvious now. But in other ways it was really quite revelatory."

The second was the shock he had when he got to Vietnam. He had always seen the issue in black-and-white terms, he said. "The policy was misguided and wrong, the war was a mistake, et cetera, et cetera. When I actually went there and got to know some of the South Vietnamese, who were genuinely terrified of what would happen to them if they lost their freedom in a takeover by the North, my easy assumptions about the nature of the conflict were challenged by the reality of it. It was so much more subtle. I still think that the policy was a mistake, but I think that it was much more complicated than either the proponents or the opponents of that policy thought." The war as an issue split his generation; the war as a reality made a mockery of the domestic political debate about it.

Once Clinton had successfully steered (we will not say dodged) his way through his period of exposure to the draft, he sailed serenely off to Yale Law School and then to his first campaign for public office. He had not taken his eyes off the prize for a minute. Gore, on the other hand, needed to put himself back together before he could go on. He was in Vietnam for five months, serving as an Army journalist. When he returned to the United States, in 1971, he swore off public service forever. He vowed, as he recalled in a speech at his twenty-fifth Harvard reunion, in 1994, that "I would never, ever go into politics." He did not exactly drop out—he worked for five years as a reporter on the *Tennessean*, a Nashville paper—but he tuned out. He went to divinity school, at Vanderbilt, and quit; he went to law school and didn't finish. He spent five years looking for an alternative to the career for which he had been raised. He finally changed his mind about politics, by all accounts overnight ("My wife was very surprised by it," he said), and in 1976 he ran successfully for his father's old congressional seat. But his whole education had taught him the necessity of undoing the damage wrought by Lyndon Johnson.



"Good night, Mommy. Good night, Daddy."

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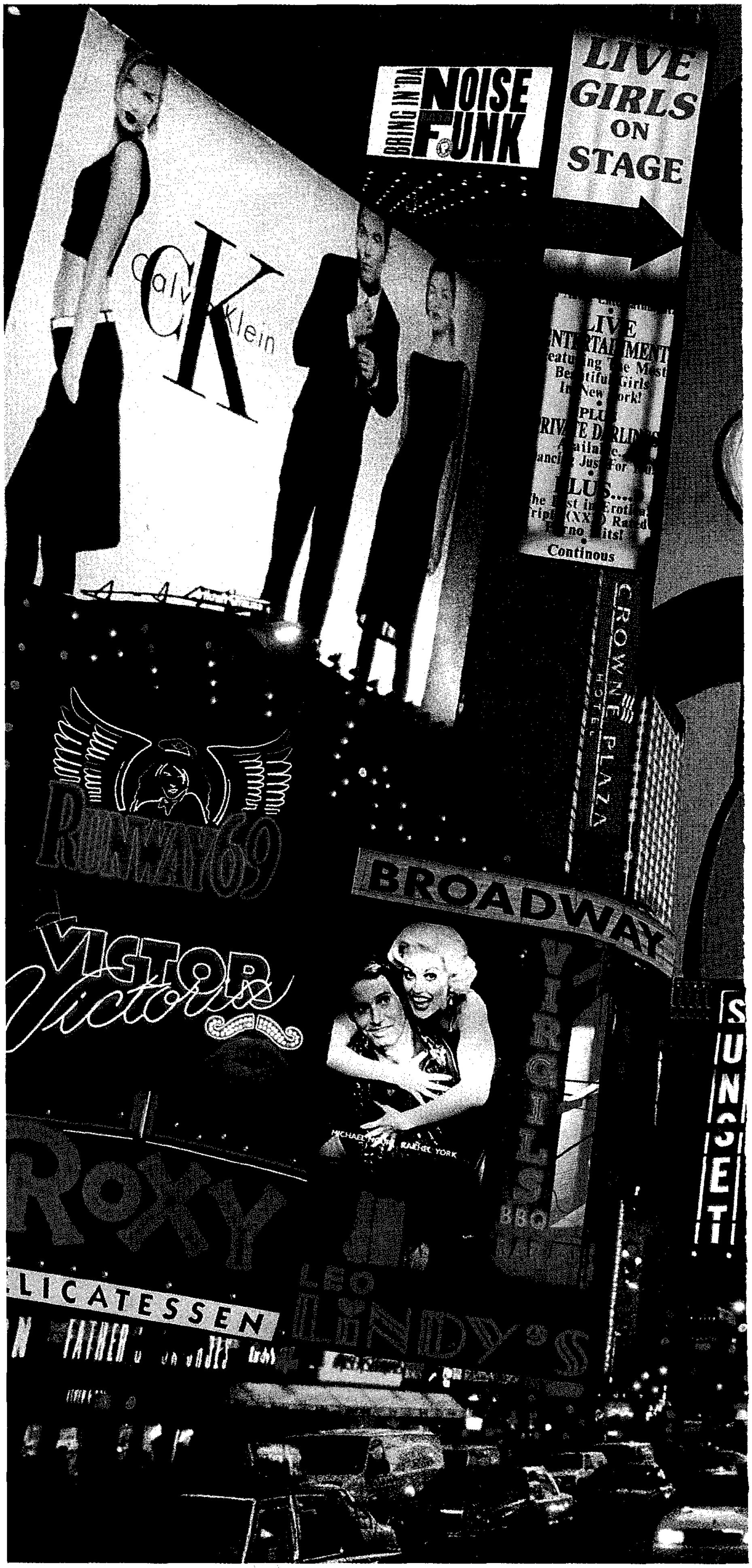
Gore's response to the sixties was therefore much more generationally typical than Clinton's was. Contrary to the usual understanding, the baby boomers didn't create the culture of the sixties; they didn't even inspire it. They consumed it. In 1968, the climax of the decade politically, the oldest baby boomer in America was just turning twenty-three. To the extent that baby boomers participated in protests, took drugs, and practiced "free love," they were responding to slogans, tastes, and fads dreamed up and promulgated by people much older than they were.

When, at the end of the decade, that whole culture seemed to implode, baby boomers were left to patch together a culture of their own in a landscape littered with fragments. The establishment and the élite culture, the culture of "the best and the brightest," were discredited; but so were the radical alternatives. Mainstream politics had produced Nixon, radical politics had produced the Weathermen, and the counterculture had produced Charles Manson. For people disillusioned or burned out by the sixties, there grew up a culture of therapy and renewal. Our problems are not political (this culture urged); our problem is our whole way of being in the world. Conflict and contention are symptoms of wrong thinking; a new age demands new epistemologies. It was the time of Erich Fromm and Alvin Toffler. This is in many respects the culture that shaped Al Gore. Gore is, to a much greater degree than Clinton, a man molded by the current of popular ideas. If he were not so manifestly buttoned-down, you might even say that he was trendy.

You know right away with Gore that his philosophical ideas were not worked up for him by speechwriters. Asked which thinkers he had been influenced by in his brief career as a divinity student, he mentioned Reinhold Niebuhr, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Edmund Husserl. Would that be Merleau-Ponty's "Phenomenology of Perception"? Yes, he said, with a flicker (just a flicker) of excitement—did I know it? He had found the work helpful, he said, "in cultivating a capacity for a more refined introspection that gave me better questions that ultimately led to a renewed determination to become involved with the effort to make things better." It is a little hard to imagine having this conversation with George W. Bush.

THE Vice-President, as it gradually emerged in our talk, is a holist, a post-postmodernist, and a goo-goo. Let us ponder these in sequence. Holism is the view that by dividing experience up into different categories—fact and value, science and religion, art and morals—we end up treating a universe that is a living, integrated whole as though it were a machine with detachable parts. We murder to dissect. Beneath appearances a single reality beautifully blooms, holists believe, but we have lost touch with it.

Gore lays the blame for these artificial divisions (his view is nothing if


BRING IN 'DA NOISE
BRING IN 'DA FUNK
LIVE GIRLS ON STAGE
Calvin Klein
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CROWNE PLAZA
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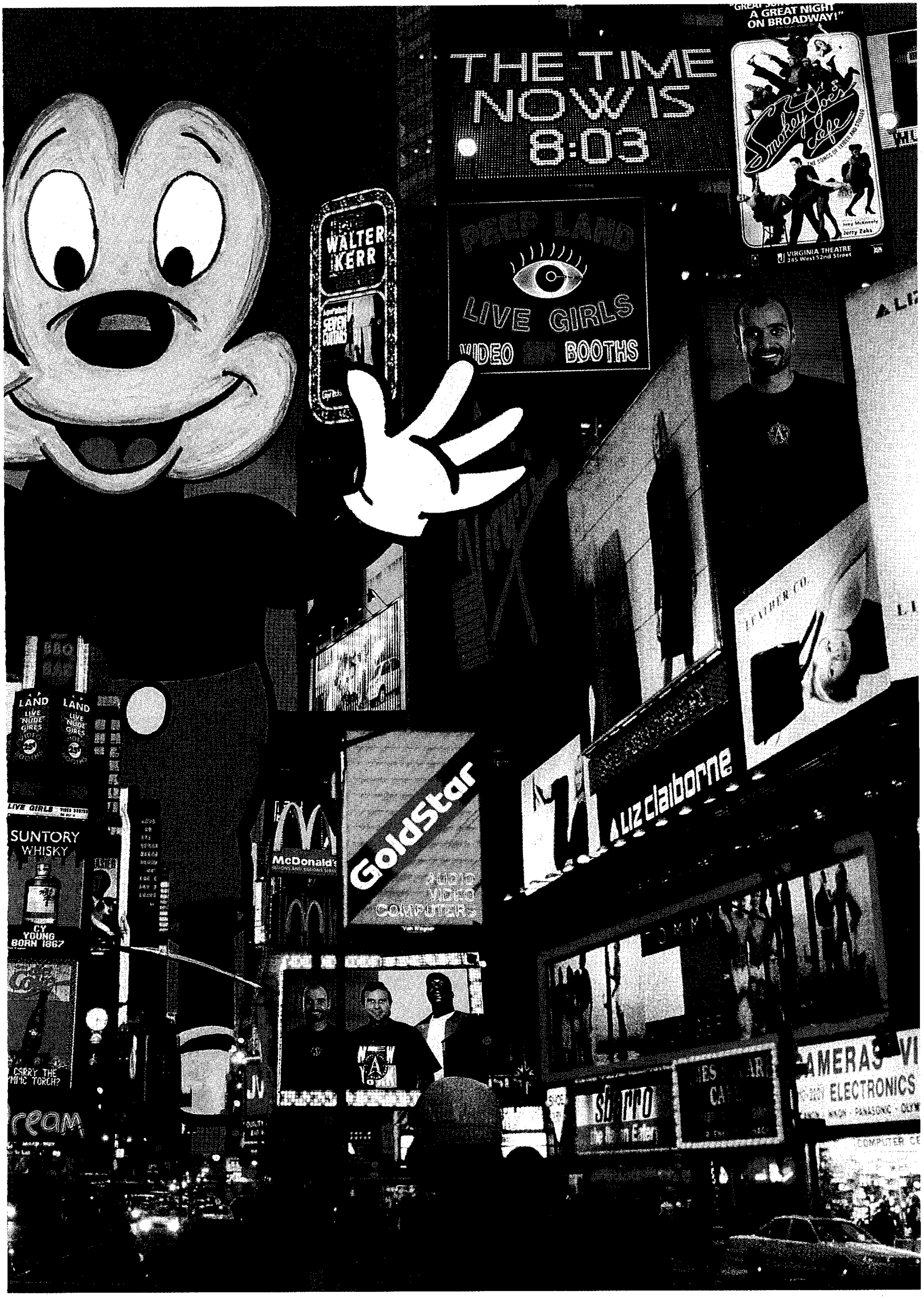
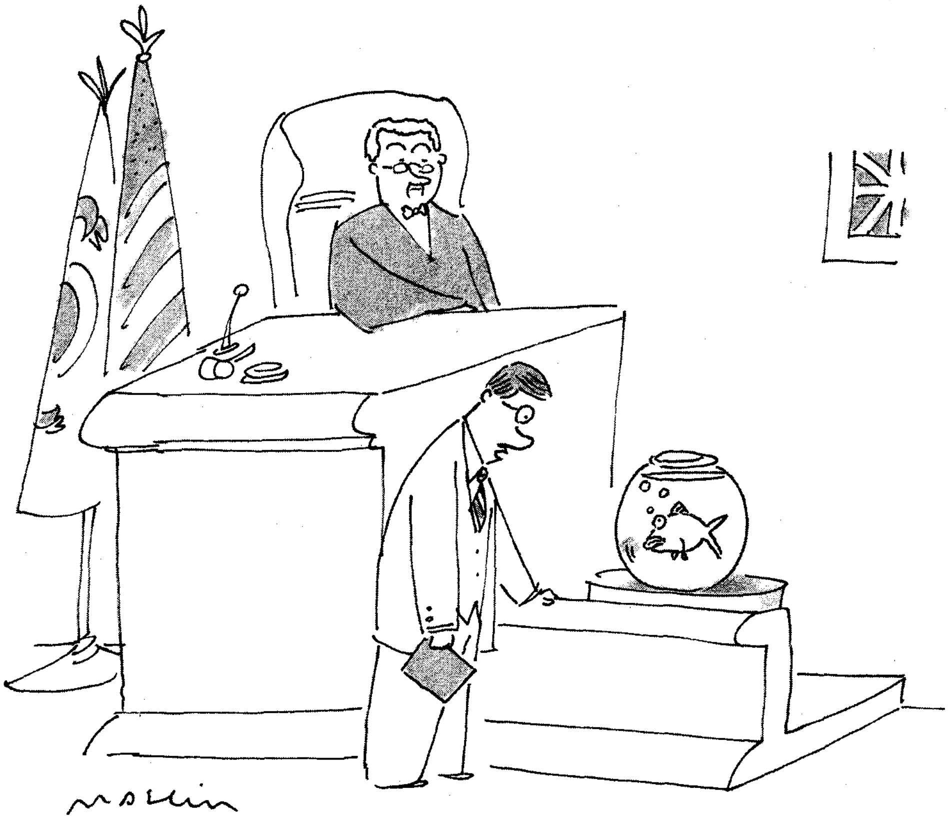
VICTOR Victoria
MICHAEL YORK
RACHEL YORK
VIRGIL'S
BBQ
ROXY
DELICATESSEN
LEO LINDY'S
SUNSET

FANTASIA

In 1958, the renowned photographer William Klein created his twelve-minute film "Broadway by Light," which, with its beautiful, brain-washing neon, was one of the first volleys of Pop art. Two years ago, several European magazine editors asked Klein to offer his impressions of the new Times Square, and he made this photomontage of a jam-packed, rodent-dominated Crossroads of the World. "There was a naïveté in the film," Klein says, in the "old-fashioned signs of Little Lulu, Mr. Peanut, Sergeant Bilko. Today, these images seem nostalgic, innocent. New York now is a hundred times worse."


"GREAT SUN... A GREAT NIGHT ON BROADWAY!"
THE TIME NOW IS 8:03
Smokey Joe's Cafe
THE SONGS OF LEIBER AND STOLLER
VIRGINIA THEATRE 245 West 52nd Street
WALTER KERR
SEVEN GUITARS
PEEP LAND
LIVE GIRLS
VIDEO BOOTHS
LAND LIVE NUDE GIRLS
LIVE GIRLS
SUNTORY WHISKY
CY YOUNG BORN 1867
CARRY THE ...MPIC TORCH?
McDonald's
GoldStar
AUDIO VIDEO COMPUTERS
liz claiborne
LEATHER CO.
TOMMY
CAMERAS VI...
ELECTRONICS
COMPUTER CE...

CONTACT PRESS IMAGES



"May I remind the witness that he is under water."

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not long) on the scientific revolution. "Clearly one of the large changes under way in our civilization," he told me, "is that we're trying to escape from the narrow segmented emphasis on specialization that began some four hundred years ago with the scientific revolution, seducing the rest of the centers of thought in our civilization into looking at the world in very narrow slices, gaining the great benefits of using this approach to understand in intricate detail ever narrower slices of the world, but at a cost of ignoring the interconnections with the rest of the world."

The most dangerous of these divisions, Gore believes, is the division between the mind and the body, for which he holds responsible Descartes's theory that the mind can know truth solely by rational introspection. A "philosophical error," Gore calls this theory in his best-selling book on the environmental crisis, "Earth in the Balance," published in 1992. "The Cartesian model of the disembodied intellect," he argues there, is responsible not only for our twentieth-century environmental problems—the destruction of the ozone layer, the elimination of plant and animal species, and global warming—but also for what he calls our whole "dysfunctional civilization." Cartesian thinking has cut us off from our feelings.

Feeling is an important category for Gore. "Feelings represent an essential link between mind and body or, to put it another way, the link between our intellect and the physical world," he says in "Earth in the Balance." "Abstract thought is but one dimension of our awareness." Living for centuries in this artificial way has produced "a kind of psychic pain at the very root of the modern mind." Gore has, it must be said, a rather abstract way of condemning abstraction: "Insisting on the supremacy of the neocortex exacts a high price," he explains in the book, "because the unnatural task of a disembodied mind is to somehow ignore the intense psychic pain that comes from the constant nagging awareness of what is missing: the experience of living in one's body as a fully integrated physical and mental being." He goes on at some length to analyze our relation to modern civilization in the vocabulary of co-dependency, addiction, denial, and recovery.

The most common misperception of Gore is that he is a techie, a super-rationalist out of touch with his inner child. Gore sometimes plays to this image by beginning public appearances with his frighteningly convincing impersonation of himself as a block of wood. But one suspects that, like many sober-sided and deliberate people, he is extremely brittle, and that it is the brittleness, rather than the self-importance, that accounts for the stubbornness. It took him five years to recover from Vietnam; his son's accident kept him out of Presidential politics for almost three years. It also led him to write "Earth in the Balance," and all the discussion in that book about addictive behavior and dysfunctional families clearly arises—he as much as says so—out of a personal trauma.

When we talked in his office, he connected the loss of the sense of integration—the "psychic pain at the root of the modern mind"—to the cynicism that he believes is poisoning politics. "Those who are cynical, those who are overly skeptical about self-government—some of their energy comes from that, too," he maintained. "And postmodernism, also a mistake, came about in reaction to that earlier emphasis on overspecialization. There's a great desire now to find the connections between different parts of our society, our civilization—science and religion being the two large subdivisions that need to be reconnected." He recommended a recent book on the subject, called "The Marriage of Sense and Soul." Did I know *that* one? "That's one of my new favorites," he said.

"The Marriage of Sense and Soul" (research reveals) is by Ken Wilber, who lives in Boulder and has written twelve previous works, including "Sex, Ecology, Spirituality" and "A Brief History of Everything." "The Marriage of Sense and Soul" is endorsed by Deepak Chopra ("Ken Wilber is one of the most important pioneers in the field of consciousness in this century. I regard him as my mentor"), the pollster Daniel Yankelovitch, and Michael Lerner, the editor of *Tikkun*. Wilber's idea is that modern civilization denies the spiritual and emotional side of experience by exalting the rational and the material. The result is what he calls the modernist "flatland," a world shorn of depth and meaning.

Wilber uses the term "postmodernism" to refer to the rejection of the claim that science is value-free and objective. He thinks that the basic impulse of postmodernism is right, but that postmodernists have gone too far, and have produced a flatland of their own. Modernists reduced the universe to external facts, he explains; postmodernists reduce it to representations, to "chains of signifiers." They, too, deny depth and meaning. The good news, however, is that cutting-edge science does reveal the presence of spirit in the universe, and this is evidently what has stirred the Vice-President. When Gore says that we are entering the "post-postmodernist era," he means that we can now set about reintegrating science and religion, and so put meaning back into our lives.

This brings us to the goo-goo. Goo-goo is shorthand for "good government," and Gore's chief assignment in the first Clinton Administration was the task of "reinventing government," a mission launched under the acronym REGO. Gore reportedly had asked to take charge of welfare reform, a politically more promising agenda, but Clinton wanted that for himself (it eventually went, by default, to Newt Gingrich), and Gore ended up with the less galvanizing project of making government more efficient. He set about it with due deliberation, however, and in many ways REGO has come to represent the essence of his philosophy of government.

Prosaic as it sounds, reinventing government is the crucial element in the Clinton-Gore plan to restore the Democratic Party. Americans are cynical about government programs, they believe, because government agencies have become monsters of bureaucratic rigidity and inefficiency, socialist dinosaurs in an entrepreneurial society. To the extent that the Democratic Party stands for the virtue of public works, Clinton and Gore had to show that public works work. They had to make government, as a branch of the service economy, deliver. This was to be their answer to Republican anti-government rhetoric and their ticket to long-term electoral success. (That is why one hears so much about the Family and Medical Leave Act, which Gore was closely involved with, even though the law is now more than five years old, and even though it is a "government program" only in a metaphysical sense, since it involves no state expenditures: it is an easily understood and popular example of friendly government.)

In enacting REGO, Gore followed the policy bible of the movement, David Osborne and Ted Gaebler's "Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit Is Transforming the Public Sector" (1992), which has enjoyed a large influence among New Democrats, but his own thinking on the subject is, as one might expect, more philosophically expansive. It springs from the unlikely union of business-management theory and the Federalist Papers. In Gore's REGO, James Madison meets Peter Drucker.

The purpose of REGO is to cut waste and downsize the workforce, and to some extent these goals are being met. The Department of Agriculture's wool-and-mohair subsidy, for example, has now been eliminated! ("The subsidy is no longer needed, since wool is no longer a strategic commodity," the official report solemnly notes.) And the federal workforce has been reduced by three hundred and fifty-one thousand employees, making it the smallest since the Kennedy Administration. But Gore's ambition is more far-reaching. It is to redesign the government workplace. It's all a matter of, as he likes to put it, the "information flow."

Gore's thinking about information derives in part from Toffler's work. (He was an early enthusiast of the author of "Future Shock.") But his blueprint for the new workplace is the United States Constitution. The Constitution was designed, he explained to me, to maximize individual contributions to the business of self-government while minimizing the tendencies toward a war of all against all based on selfish inter-

"Gee whiz, Mr. Collins—two hundred and six isn't old!"

ests. Representative democracy achieves this goal (this is Madison's argument in Federalist No. 10) by establishing mediating institutions, like Congress, which allow representatives to resolve political disputes with an eye to the good of the whole while remaining responsive to local interests. "You could see our Constitution as a kind of software," he suggested (Gore, not Madison). It channels "the flow of insights from individual American citizens toward a system for collecting the ones that have the most inherent value, according to a democratic vote, and then basing the decisions of the country on what results."

Business-management theory, Gore said, has finally caught up to this eighteenth-century insight (and here the slowness dial received an extra twist): "Just as our Founders labored to write a constitution that would take advantage of that insight by embedding it in an architecture that would make the most productive use of those things," cutting-edge managers "now try to set up systems that convince their employees that their insights are highly valued, encourage them to pay attention to what they're doing, holistically, encourage them to see the connections between what they're doing and the overall goals of the organization, and then they set up systems for collecting those insights, editing them, discarding the ones that don't make any sense, and implementing the ones that are good." In REGO, this theory produced the "reinvention lab," in which government employees are free to come up with ways to streamline their agency's delivery of services.

In a commencement address at M.I.T. two years ago, Gore used a different analogy. "The first computers," he explained to the graduates, "relied on a central processing unit surrounded by a field of memory. To find the answer to a particular problem, the C.P.U. would send out to the memory to retrieve data, then bring it to the center for processing." This was inefficient. Then came the breakthrough known as "distribution intelligence," which distributes the processing function throughout the memory field, "in the form of smaller, separate processors, each co-located with the memory it processes." Now when you ask a computer to perform a task "all of the processors begin to work simultaneously and process a small quantity of information. Then all of the separate parts of the answer are sent simultaneously to the center where they are assembled. One trip. Less time and heat." (Just like Congress?)

It would not be too much to say that Gore is in love with this metaphor. He believes that it explains the superiority of constitutional democracies over centralized state systems, and the superiority of free markets over command-control economies. It is a market theory of society: if all the little decisions are processed correctly, an invisible hand will guide the progress of the whole. You might sum it up as classical liberal holism: what is optimal for one must be optimal for all. This conception of decision-making is one reason that the Vice-President is such a fan of the Internet: it democratizes the flow of information.

Who are the enemies of such an approach? I asked, still eager, in my retrograde way, to uncover conflict. The Vice-President did not rise to the bait. "Anything that interrupts the smooth operations of that organization," he said. "The level of cynicism that we talked about earlier is an enemy of the country's ability to succeed because it disrupts the flow of ideas and pollutes the debate over genuine differences into a contest of demonization aimed at those who hold particular views." As Madison had argued, he told me, "differences of mere opinion" can be a cause of social disintegration, when "people focus only on the differences and demonize those who disagree with them."

Gore stood up. We had barely scratched the surface, he said; he regretted not having more time—though we had talked uninterrupted for an hour. Back outside, in the reception area, members of the Congressional Black Caucus were filing out of the Oval Office; a group of Russians was filing in, all looking desperately in need of a cigarette. I left the White House grounds through the Northwest Gate, with its now unforgettable associations—this is where Monica Lewinsky threw a fit in front of the Secret Service after learning that the Big Creep was entertaining Eleanor Mondale in the Oval Office,

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FORECAST

TOUGH LOVE

IT was James Baldwin who, in 1983, set Suzan-Lori Parks on the path to becoming a playwright. "I took a creative-writing class with him, and he suggested that, because I was very animated, I try playwriting," Parks says. "I felt that was such a cool idea. It had never occurred to me to do anything in the *theatre*"—she slips for a moment into an English accent. "I mean, I had been a squirrel in the Thanksgiving pageant, but that was it."

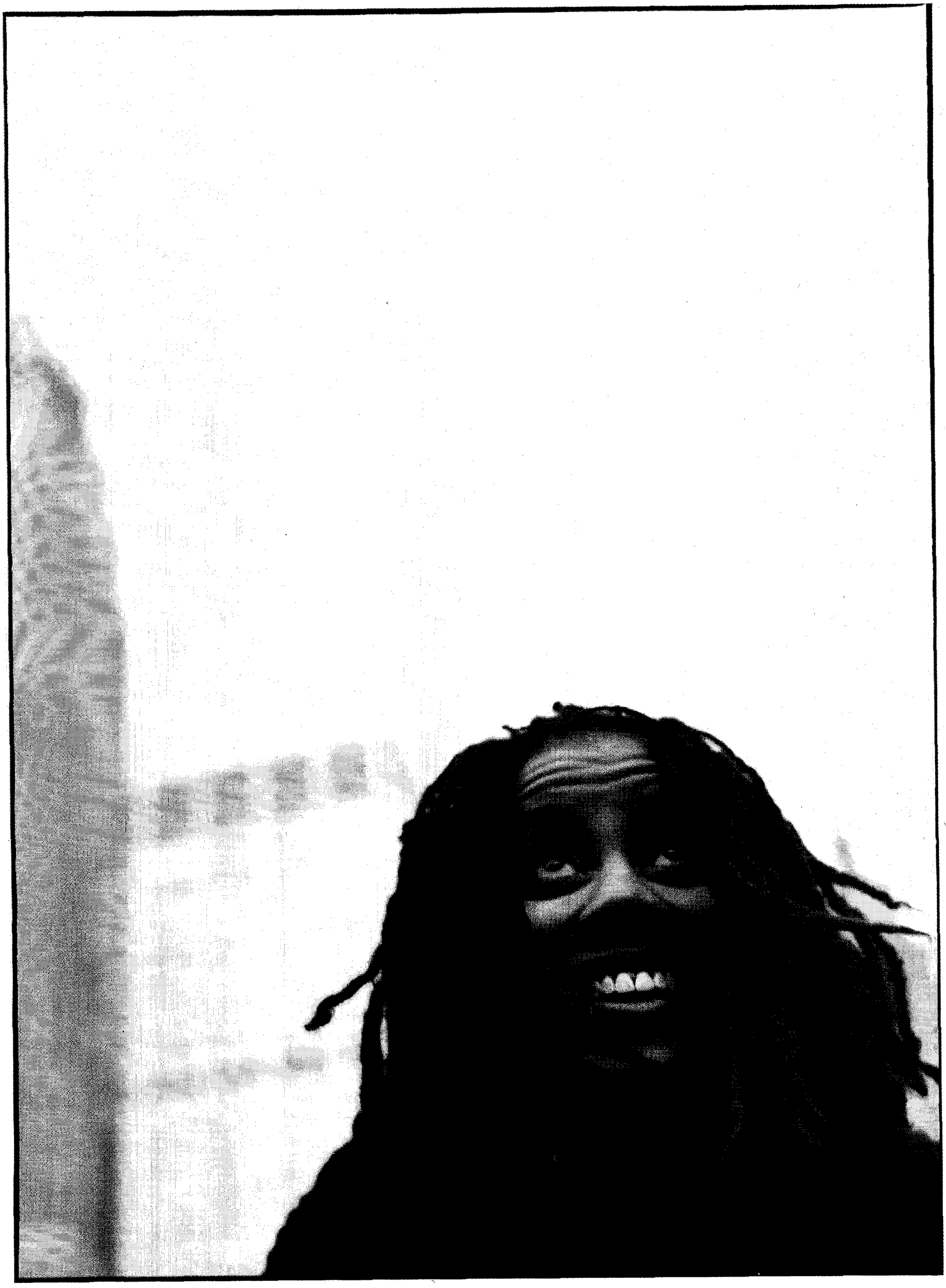
The same supercharged liveliness propelled Parks from her début production in New York—a play that she staged herself in a bar in the East Village—to an Obie in 1990 for "Imperceptible Mutabilities in the Third Kingdom," and then to a sympathetic artistic home at the Public Theatre, in 1994. There Parks has offered "The America Play," which centers on a black Lincoln impersonator, and won another Obie, for "Venus," a work based on the true-life story of the so-called Hottentot Venus, who was brought from South Africa to London and Paris in 1810 and put on exhibit on account of her enormous buttocks.

Parks's new play, "In the Blood," which the Public will produce in the 1999-2000 season, concerns a welfare mother of five, who serves as a mirror for the sexual weaknesses of a parade of supposedly responsible adults—her minister, her doctor, and her social worker—and whose fierce love for her children does not prevent her from slaughtering one of them in the play's final moments. Like Parks's earlier works, the troubling subject matter is wrapped up in beguilingly fluent, poetic language, as when the ambiguous heroine, Hester, explains, "We was making ends meet all right then—Ends got further apart."

In spite of the bleakness of the stories to which she is drawn, Parks says, "There is so much love in all the plays. Not just 'I love you' but people embracing people, people putting their arms maybe around each other, and maybe around the space that is left behind when a person leaves."

—REBECCA MEAD

PHOTOGRAPH BY
NORMAN JEAN ROY



that two-timer!—and suddenly the Administration's problems began to seem a lot less metaphysical.

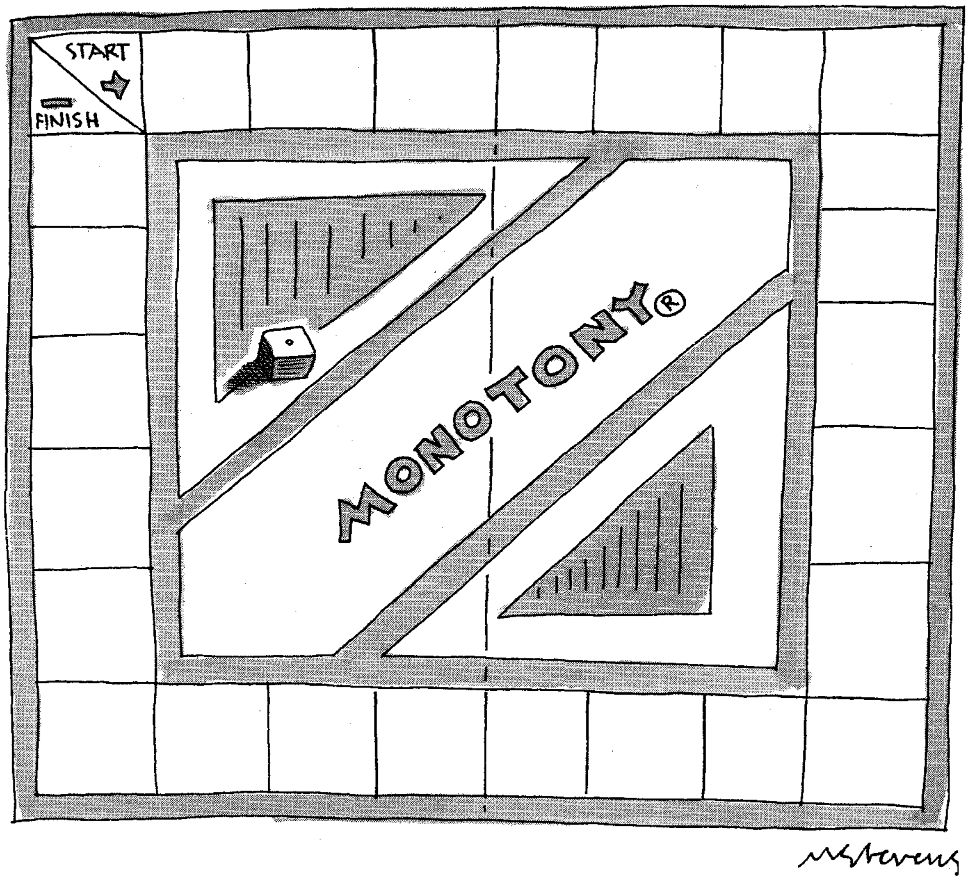
ALTHOUGH Gore has yoked himself to Clinton—"I have been by his side every step of the way," he proudly told Richard Berke, of the *Times*, last December—he has by far the more conservative instincts. In 1988, when the Cold War was still on, he ran as the most hawkish of the Democratic candidates, and it is worth remembering that the Willie Horton issue, which came to symbolize the debacle of the Dukakis Presidential campaign, was first broached, during the primaries, by Gore. (Gore raised the question of Massachusetts' prison-furlough policy; the Bush campaign racialized the issue. The despicable campaigns run by Lee Atwater and James Baker in 1988 and by Baker again in 1992, when the Bush campaign tried to make it seem that Clinton was a traitor because he had gone to Moscow as a student in 1969, arguably bear a lot more responsibility for the degradation of national politics than Watergate. Nixon, after all, was punished.)

In the Administration, Gore has been alert to prevent Clinton from veering too far to his left. The Clinton Presidency began by impersonating the Democratic Party it was supposed to have displaced. It proposed policies (gays in the military, a fiscal stimulus package) and programs (health-care reform) that are associated with a big and activist government, and the Party was clobbered in the 1994 midterm elections. After the deluge, Gore reportedly was instrumental in getting Clinton back on the New Democrat platform of smaller, more decentralized, more entrepreneurial government—Government Lite. And in the summer of 1996, when the Republican Congress passed welfare-reform legislation, with the notion that Clinton, under pressure from his electoral base, would veto it and hand Bob Dole a potentially winning issue in the Presidential campaign, Gore is said to have urged Clinton to sign the bill. He did, and robbed Dole of every issue save one that he could hardly bring himself to raise—character.

But then Gore seems to have made a mistake. When it became clear, in the final weeks, that Dole could not win, Clinton had a choice of continuing to campaign for the national ticket, in the hope of winning a majority of the popular vote, or of campaigning instead for Democrats in local House races, in the hope of regaining the House. He decided to push up his own numbers. Clinton and Gore fell short of fifty per cent in the popular vote, in part because the Indonesian connection (remember that one?) dominated the news just before the election; and the Democrats fell short of retaking the House. As a consequence, Clinton faces impeachment proceedings in a House controlled by the rival party. According to Elizabeth Drew's book on the 1996 election, "Whatever It Takes," Gore was one of the people behind the decision not to campaign in the House races. He apparently did not want his most likely primary rival in 2000, Dick Gephardt, to become the Speaker (a motive not entirely consistent with the ambition to restore the Democratic Party to dominance). The Democrats have another shot at the House this fall, but, unless Clinton can perform political jujitsu on his opponents (which is not inconceivable; Clinton is a man who is lucky in his enemies), it is probably too late.

A Republican Congress will be able to drag out impeachment hearings well into next year—a year that was to have been Gore's chance to perform more in the spotlight. There is also, of course, the ongoing investigation into the Democrats' fund-raising practices in the 1996 campaign, which will almost certainly look at Gore's role. And then there is the personality issue. Clinton's electoral success is due in part to his centrist politics, but in part to sheer salesmanship. Whenever he can get his face in front of the camera, his approval ratings go up. Gore does not have this particular magic. His charisma emission level is unusually low.

Gore is more sophisticated about the media than his public style suggests. He wrote his senior thesis at Harvard on the impact of television on the Presidency, concluding that because television loves one face over many faces its effect has been to increase the President's political power at the expense of Congress's. In his conversation with



me, he described (using what he referred to, with obvious satisfaction, as an "arcane metaphor" involving the religions of India) the difficulty of conducting the business of government in a televisual culture. But understanding the problem has not helped him solve it. He continues to look programmed in a medium in which everyone is programmed not to look programmed. Still, there is one fundamental rule in electoral politics: somebody has to beat you. It will be hard for a candidate to get noticeably to Gore's right without looking like an extremist. And, to the extent that the electorate is fed up with Clinton, Gore will profit by the contrast. After Elvis came the Beatles. (Also, it's true, the Monkees.)

But can Gore campaign on a platform of non-hierarchical management structures and access to the information flow? The old Democratic Party was defined by its interest groups. The new Democratic Party of Clinton and Gore is supposed to be defined by its transcendence of interest-group politics. Coöperative government is the ideal. Can you win elections by appealing to a constituency of the whole? Gore has been careful to preserve his connections with the traditional Democratic base. He is, for example, a fervent supporter of affirmative action. "Don't tell me that our persistent vulnerability to racism has suddenly disappeared, and that we now live in a color-blind society," he said in a sermonesque address to the N.A.A.C.P. last July. "We've left Egypt, but don't tell me we've arrived in Canaan." When he gets down to policy, though, he sticks to the Government Lite formula. In the same speech, he proposed using "voluntary tools, such as charter schools, magnet schools, and public-school choice to seek more diversity," and spoke proudly of the Administration's "E-rate" initiative—a special rate, offered to poor school districts, for connection to the Internet. This is not the language of Roosevelt.

Victoria Roberts

"Can I call you back? I'm shopping."

But it is a mistake to assume that it is not interest-group politics. Policies like those are aimed directly at a specific constituency: the so-called "wired workers," people who use computers on the job, work in non-hierarchical organizations, and practice on-the-job problem solving—Gore's cyber-Madisonians. According to an analysis by Elaine Kamarck (who directed Gore's REGO program until last year) and William Galston in a new magazine called *Blueprint*, which is being published as a kind of policy forum to accompany the Gore Presidential campaign, thirty-seven per cent of Californians are now classified as "wired workers." They are socially liberal, fiscally conservative, and market-friendly. If holism means that what is good for you must be good for everybody, then they are probably holists, too. Gore speaks their tongue.

Whether he can rouse them to leave their screen-savers on for a few hours and actually go out and vote is another question. For Gore is a peculiar politician. He thinks long (holding Descartes responsible for the destruction of the rain forest, for example), but he plays a short game (jockeying to deny Gephardt field position in the race in 2000). He is a man whose philosophy is fuzzy but whose affect is rectilinear. And he maintains an abstract faith in process and flow, even though his Administration is now facing disaster in part because of the intersection of an unfettered legal inquiry with an unguided information economy. Clinton and Gore don't need more process. Process is precisely what is killing these guys.

Gore's faith in process (in "the smooth operations of the organization") belongs, like his holism, to the mild, ecumenist side of his personality; but this is not, one comes to feel, what drives him. Professing a belief in processes is a way of masking the brute reality of politics, which is will. When we approve of a political or judicial outcome, we tend to say that "the system worked." But it wasn't the system that drove Nixon from office or that denied Robert Bork a seat on the Supreme Court, any more than it was the system that awarded a seat to Clarence Thomas and produced the Starr report. Those things happened because people committed themselves, against the normal flow of traffic, to making them happen. Politics is a battle against process, just as life is. It is a war against the tendency of things to take their natural course. That's why we care (when we do care) about politicians: because they offer to turn the tide of events in directions we favor. And we don't mind if they make a few enemies while they're at it. We want our team in charge. I'm pretty sure that Al Gore knows the feeling. ♦

ANNALS OF SPACE

STARSHIP PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

The entrepreneur Jim Benson is starting the first commercial-space-exploration company, for scientific progress—and financial gain.

BY PETER LANDESMAN

EARLY next year, one of the most extraordinary capitalist dramas of the late twentieth century will begin in earnest. In a warehouse outside San Diego, engineers and skilled workers will start putting together a new kind of spacecraft, the unmanned Near Earth Asteroid Prospector, or NEAP. Then, in April, 2001, the craft will be launched—not by NASA or some other government entity but by SpaceDev, the world's first commercial-space-exploration company. Thirteen months later, after flying two and a half million miles, the spacecraft will rendezvous with Nereus, an asteroid whose irregular orbit around the sun will bring it into the Earth's cosmic neighborhood early in 2002. If all goes well, the spacecraft will conduct experiments for scientists who have paid to put instruments on board; it will also land instruments on the asteroid itself, something the like of which has never been attempted before. About a tenth of the way to its meeting with Nereus, NEAP will fly past the moon and drop a probe to scrutinize the lunar surface with the same sort of camera Pathfinder used to explore the surface of Mars, in 1997. Above all, though, the expedition will mark the beginning of an extraterrestrial industrial revolution fuelled by a combination of scientific ingenuity and commercial drive that may look, at first glance, like space piracy.

Jim Benson, the founder of SpaceDev, is a fifty-two-year-old software entrepreneur who has the ruddy looks of a Midwestern farm boy and a closetful of identical blue suits. (He grew up in Kansas City; his father was a cattle rancher, a stockbroker, and an adman.) Since he established the company, he has recruited many of the world's leading authorities on space to work on his design-and-management team, either as consultants or as full-time employees. Among them are a onetime mission planner for the Apollo manned space program; the lead investigator on the Lunar Prospector mission, which last January discovered signs of water on the moon; and a former top NASA official. NASA administrator Daniel Goldin is also an enthusiastic supporter of the new venture. He has distributed some of the funding NASA earmarks for private enterprise so that universities and scientists can meet Benson's price. (Running an experiment on NEAP will cost ten to fifteen million dollars.)

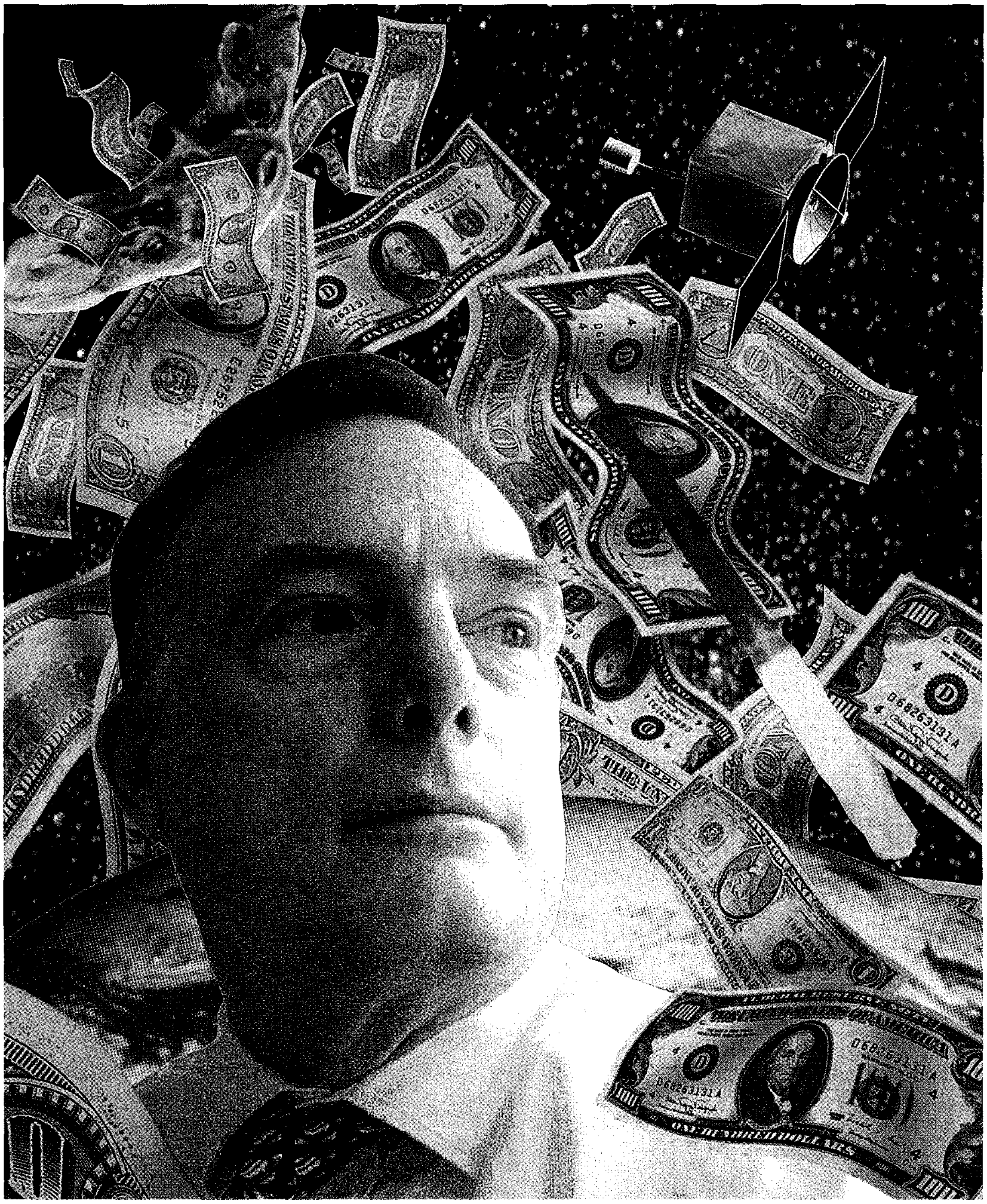
Benson's project raises serious questions about the ownership, exploitation, and regulation of outer space in the next century. The project could also make members of his team extremely rich. Some asteroids are flying mountains of stainless steel and precious metals such as gold and platinum. Other big space rocks, called carbonaceous asteroids, offer conditions—carbon, water, moderate temperatures—that could have once supported, or might still support, primitive forms of life. Once NEAP makes contact with Nereus, Benson plans to declare the asteroid his private property and assert his right to mine it, both for minerals and for scientific data. "No longer is outer space the exclusive realm of engineers and scientists," he told me recently. "Multidisciplinary people are involved now—doers, entrepreneurs, real-estate developers, investment banks." Paraphrasing an old Steven Jobs Apple Computer slogan, Benson summarized SpaceDev's mission as "Space for the rest of us."

SpaceDev's East Coast office, where I talked with him, is a sparsely furnished suite of rooms situated in a tower of reflective glass amid other towers of reflective glass in Arlington, Virginia. The company's main headquarters is in San Diego, but Benson recently opened this office, in the suburbs of Washington, D.C., to be near the embassies of countries that may someday buy a ride on his space bus. He seemed perplexed that so few people grasp the importance of the project. "Outside the box the space community lives in," he said, "the world has no idea what is about to happen."

This is Benson's stump speech, and he delivers it almost daily, with the automatic exuberance of a politician, to potential investors, NASA officials, and space enthusiasts. He mixes the nerdy boosterism of high-tech capitalism with the urgent idealism common among aerospace visionaries. Space exploration is not just about spaceships and flags and footprints, he tells his listeners with his eyes alight. It's about finding alternatives to life on Earth.

"Buckminster Fuller said that Earth is a spaceship," Benson said. "We have our own life-support system. It's the oceans, it's all of life. And it's all interrelated. It's a spacecraft with a built-in life-support system, and, piece by piece, we are dismantling it as we fly through space. How long can we keep it up?" He added, "If we don't drown in our own crap, we'll get whacked"—by an asteroid. The kind of space exploration Benson envisions, he explained, "may offer solutions in both respects, moving resource exploitation into space, where there isn't any life and never will be any—onto asteroids—and creating the industrial infrastructure to allow settlements for humanity to survive the ultimate catastrophe. . . . Everything else is just wishful thinking. When you see 'Deep Impact' or 'Armageddon'—I mean, planting nuclear weapons on those things? It'll never happen. We don't have a clue what to do about them. And until we get up there and

DARREL REES



start working with them, and making a living off them, we won't have a clue."

THIS summer's catastrophic explosions of two rockets shortly after liftoff—Boeing's Delta III and Lockheed's Titan IV A—were expensive reminders that space is a risky business. More than a billion dollars' worth of technology blew up, and the market for commercial satellite launchings was dealt a severe setback.

Still, the numbers that Benson puts on the table are persuasive. It will cost SpaceDev less than fifty million dollars to send NEAP to Nereus, and the trip could generate revenues of at least a hundred and twenty million dollars in research and data fees, which would yield a profit of more than seventy million dollars. In addition to being lucrative, the payload of lunar and asteroidal experiments that Benson hopes to assemble will be historic. For the first time, one space mission will do research for university scientists, for NASA, for private corporations, and for Japanese and European space agencies. Benson also intends to design three experiments of his own and sell the data to NASA, whose policy mandate is to buy all commercially available space science.

Benson envisions the outer shell of NEAP—a craft of roughly nine cubic yards, which looks in computer renderings like a squared-off bucket awkwardly winged with a pair of solar flaps—covered with the logos of companies like Microsoft ("Where do you

Jim Benson thinks of space as a refuge from mankind's ecological despoliation of the home planet—and as good business.

Gahan Wilson

"Of course, he's very low-maintenance."

want to go today?") and Visa ("Anywhere You Want to Be"). An Israeli milk company has already paid Russia to shoot a commercial on Mir, its creaky space station. So it is not difficult to imagine NEAP hurtling into space tattooed like a NASCAR racer.

Benson is not an inventor, but an ingenious shopper who bought parts off the shelf. "It's not like I'm some crackpot scientist who has come up with a brand-new widget that is the greatest widget ever designed," he said. Between eighty and ninety per cent of NEAP will be assembled from components that were developed and tested on previous NASA missions—including the flight computer, the solar panels, the rocket thrusters, and the spacecraft's skin.

If it all works as planned, SpaceDev will have revolutionized not only spacecraft construction but also the way in which space science is conducted. Cheaper, more efficient missions would mean that "you'll do planetary science and exploration in a better way," Lynn Harper, a co-leader for astrobiology at NASA's Ames Research Center, told me. "If you only get to go someplace once, you're going to hit the features of greatest interest with the fewest risks, because you're only going to have one chance to collect data. That means you're going to look for what you're pretty sure is already there. When you go multiple times, you can take higher risks, with the potential for higher payoffs. On comets and planetary bodies, that includes the search for life."

THE closest thing to a test run of the Benson model was Alan Binder's Lunar Prospector, which was launched in January of this year and has spent five months orbiting the moon, collecting data. The Prospector, a privately designed and managed project, was the most cost-effective lunar and planetary space mission ever flown. It performed its task flawlessly at a tenth of what many believed NASA would have spent. "When Prospector started, most of my colleagues wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole," said Binder, a NASA veteran who is the principal investigator of the Prospector mission. "It was heresy—it was 'NASA will not like this.'" Binder's organization, the Lunar Research Institute, now has an informal, coöperative relationship with Benson. "Fuck NASA!" Binder exclaimed gleefully, with a sweep of his arm. "I think NASA is the enemy and should be treated like the enemy. They threw away twenty-five years. We had Apollo. We not only had the capability of putting a man on the moon, we had plans and the ability to have a lunar base by the eighties. We threw all that away because of the Vietnam War, social issues. We went to the moon politically. We wanted to show that we could beat the Russians. The public did not understand why we were doing this. But we dropped it dead. The exploration of space as a government program is just never going to do it. It's too costly. There's no payback. Science is wonderful, but the American public is not going to get excited about science. So until we learn how to do this commercially we're not going to explore the moon the way we have to."

Binder pointed to the spending of forty billion dollars for the projected International Space Station as the epitome of NASA ineptitude. "It's a political football," he said, laughing. "The shuttle is no damn use. NASA justifies it by saying we need it for the future, to support the space station. But the space station is needed for what? Well, there's no answer. It's a catastrophe. It's how many years late, how many billion dollars over budget? When it's up there, it's not going to be extremely useful. The public is not interested in it. This is leading nowhere." Indeed, NASA will be requesting an additional six hundred million dollars to, in effect, bail out the bankrupt Russian space agency, its main partner in the space station. Russia, in turn, has sold much of its allotted research time to NASA for an additional sixty million dollars. The space station, which began as a post-Cold War project to unite the world aerospace community, has become a millstone for America.

NASA's top officials understand that they may no longer control the future of space exploration. Wes Huntress, NASA'S outgoing associate administrator for space science, believes that Benson has the potential to be a historic figure—the Henry Ford of the twenty-first century. "He's the only one who has the vision," Huntress told me in his office last spring. "There have been many people coming through my door who say, 'I *want to do a private* commercial mission, here's what I want to do, now give me a hundred million dollars.' That is not a private commercial mission. Jim's first words were 'I won't want your money.' That got my attention. All he wanted was the opportunity to compete."

Nevertheless, Benson's business plan relies heavily on NASA funds. His first customers are likely to be the scientists who receive grants from NASA's Discovery Program, which was set up expressly to help scientists pay private companies that can facilitate their experiments. Likewise, Benson will be able to sell his own space research only as long as the American, the Japanese, and the European space agencies continue to purchase data—and thus sustain a potential billion-dollar-a-year market. In a similar manner, Binder's Lunar Prospector mission, which was touted as the first successful commercial spaceflight, was in fact made possible by a NASA contract.

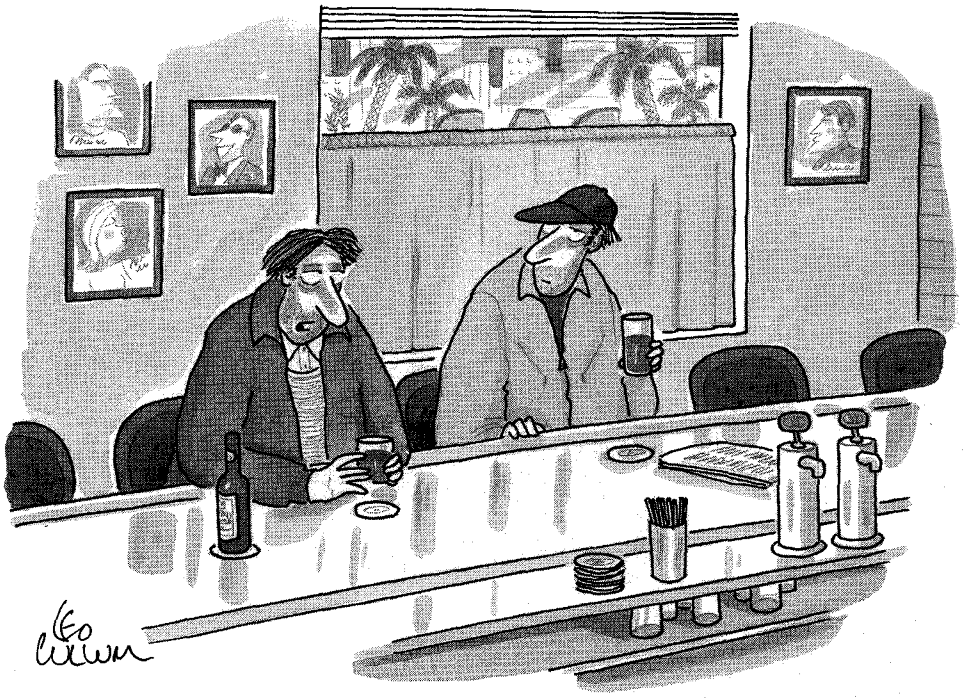
When I suggested to Benson that NASA will always have a technological advantage over private industry, because its research can be incubated away from the pressures of impatient stockholders and quarterly reports, he shrugged. "Starting in the next ten years, as space commercialization takes off and the companies are profitable, and they get into competitive mode to do their own R. & D. to compete with each other, the need for NASA is going to start fading," he said. "We've been going nowhere for twenty years. The space shuttle is going in circles. Astronauts are playing with Slinkys."

DAN GOLDIN, the NASA administrator, doesn't necessarily disagree with Benson's critique. "If we set mediocre goals, we get mediocre results," he told me. "If we set goals not to have failure, we never learn. One of the problems we have here at NASA is that we're so afraid of failure we spend billions of dollars protecting ourselves against it." Goldin speaks of Benson's project with great enthusiasm. "This is a hell of a courageous thing to do," he said. "It will get people's attention focussed on the frontier still to be conquered."

Goldin spoke with me in his NASA office. He wore cowboy boots, but his speech bent and stretched with the long vowels of his native Bronx. He is known for his gung-ho, shoot-first-and-ask-questions-later dedication to the space program. A table in his office was covered with plastic models of the agency's current projects—the X-33 rocketplane, pieces of the International Space Station, and various spacecraft, all white and gleaming and aerodynamic. Fiddling with a model, he said, "Look, all we do is make movies about Apollo. What we do in America is not write history—we watch history. And we're getting satisfaction out of entertainment based on historical fact. Opening the space frontier tells our kids that life is not about mediocrity—it's about taking risks. Maybe risking one's life. It's about failing and then coming back and succeeding. . . . Space is more than entertainment. It is a projection of what we all want: some meaning in our lives."

Goldin is redrafting NASA's mandate to create a more streamlined agency that will focus solely on deep-space technology. By his own estimation, within ten years NASA's gradual withdrawal from activity between Earth and the moon will put seventy-five per cent of all space efforts, commercial and scientific, into the hands of private citizens like Benson. Houston Mission Control was contracted out to a private consortium last month. The space shuttle is already managed, in part, by private contractors, and the International Space Station will soon be on the block.

NASA hopes that stepping aside and letting the more efficient private sector develop space can work as well as it did for communications satellites. NASA launched the first direct-broadcast TV satellite in 1976 to assist global coöperation in medicine. The private sector was unwilling to assume the initial risks of testing the new technology, but once the government had proved it could be profitable corporations rushed in. NASA finally got out of the business in the early nineties. By 2006, more than seventeen hundred commercial communications satellites will be in Earth's orbit. NASA's head of policy and planning, Alan Ladwig, had considered leaving for the private sector, but then decided that for now he is more valuable in government, where he can smooth the road for private corporations like SpaceDev. Still, he remains clear about his priorities. "A success by Benson will do more to jump-start the economic return from space than sending a handful of astronauts who will plant flags on Mars," he told me. "The agency's role has shifted from being the implementer of the space program to being the provider of the technology that will allow the country to get into space. Our purpose is to



"I've been stalking actors, but eventually I'd like to stalk a director."

do something new and different that industry will be able to use after we're done with it."

Goldin agrees. "I am going to focus on technology that is impossible. I am going to put up spacecraft three times the size of the Hubble, separate them by three or four football fields, and I'm going to have to know their exact position to within a billionth of a metre. Then I'm going to have to physically place them to within one inch, and hold that one-inch distance at half a billion miles. On top of that, I'm going to send out robots and train robots to change broken equipment, and communicate with the robots over that enormous distance. No corporation can do that. We will do things that no one can even conceive of doing."

Jim Benson's mission to commercialize space began a little more than two years ago. At the time, he was fifty, financially secure, and had retired to a new home, in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. But his convictions about space as a source of great hope and great fear for mankind date back to the early seventies. As a college student, in the sixties, Benson had become infatuated with the earliest generation of computers, and had taught himself to program. In 1972, he took a computer job in Washington, D.C. Soon after he arrived, a neighbor gave him a copy of "The Limits to Growth," a study for the Club of Rome, which warned, in apocalyptic terms, of global warming and resource depletion. Until then, Benson had considered himself a "default conservative," essentially apolitical. He had been alienated by Vietnam and Watergate. "The Limits to Growth" gave him a vision of the interconnectedness among land, sky, water, and man. He quit computer programming, took the Civil Service exam, and went to work for the Solar Energy Division of the United States Energy Research and Development Administration, as the Department of Energy was then known.

At ERDA, Benson earned a reputation as a crusader. He managed an impact study of the Ford Administration's National Energy Plan, which concluded that the government was ignoring new technologies such as solar and wind power while subsidizing oil, gas, and nuclear power. Benson became an adviser to the Presidential campaign of Governor Jimmy Carter, whose environmental goals were more in line with his own, and he was one of a half-dozen environmentalists who helped frame the Carter Administration's energy policy.

But his science fell under suspicion at what by then had become the Department of Energy. A high official at the department during Benson's time there, who asked not to be identified, described Benson as a zealot who slanted data to favor alternative energy sources. Benson denies this. "People who were unhappy with those objective results were party-liners, who accused me of not being a team player, because the results did not agree with their preconceived and politically derived conceptions," he said. In any case, Benson was asked to resign. His boss in the Solar Energy Division, Hank Marvin, recalled that it was clear, even then, that Benson was too driven to survive in a bureaucracy. "He is just what I thought," Marvin said, "reaching one step beyond what we thought we could reach in our lifetime."

Benson became an independent computer programmer, and in 1984 won a contract to write software for new federal procurement regulations. Among other things, his company, Compusearch, designed the algorithm that in microseconds can find particular words and phrases in huge bodies of text—one of the precursors of the Internet search engine. He sold Compusearch in 1995 for several million dollars, and in 1996, straining against the confines of inactivity, began to revive his childhood fascination with outer space. He immersed himself in aerospace literature, compiled a list of what he considered the ten most brilliant minds in the industry, and E-mailed them one by one. What, he wanted to know, was there left to do? What would be interesting and useful? What could make money?

One man—Steve Ostro, of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, who is one of the world's leading radar astronomers—wrote back. Using radar, Ostro had recently studied the asteroid 1986 DA, and determined that it was the old metallic core of a minor planet that had once existed between Mars and Jupi-

FORECAST

DESIGN THEORY

At a midtown fashion show last month in Manhattan, the up-and-coming design collective known as ORFI took a page from the Straight Edge movement for its spring menswear line. Straight Edge started in the eighties as an anti-youth youth movement: hipsters who eschewed alcohol and drugs and tobacco and casual sex, and listened to lots of hard-core. Straight Edge, as Don Hearn, one of ORFI's founders, puts it, was about "rebelling against rebellion," and so the ORFI spring line was a kind of anti-street streetwear. One model marched down the runway in cotton pants cut in the baggy style of the street and a fitted shirt that made the whole ensemble look, suddenly, nice. Another wore gray herringbone pants and an orange nylon raincoat studded with white plastic buttons, and a third wore classic mint cotton slacks with a loose burgundy topcoat. Everyone wore shoes by Spot-bilt, a division of Saucony that makes no-nonsense athletic footwear for people who spend lots of time on Astro-Turf. "It's reinventing the idea of the urban gentleman," Scott Kruger, another of the principals at ORFI, says. "It's about being urban, being active, but still being a gentleman. It's a tough balance."

ORFI wants people to be hip, but it wants them to be nice and upstanding as well. In its mission statement the group says that it believes in "promoting useless relationships, having fun, playing games (sex, parties, drugs), as well as developing responsibilities to the community." The ORFI line is sold out of a tiny store on Prince Street in the fashion barrio east of SoHo. But, while other small startup fashion stores in the neighborhood are, well, fashiony, with funky fixtures and really cool things in the windows, the ORFI store, which is named the Hotel of the Rising Star, is all shiny and serious and grownup, with blond wood floors and big picture windows. Almost half the display space is given over to books that look as if they were from the reading list of a New School seminar: "The Society of the Spectacle," "Red London: Mob Violence, Mob

Vengeance, Mob Rule," a coffee-table book on the architecture of Peter Zumthor, and all kinds of essays by Dutch people on urban planning. ORFI is an acronym for Organization for Returning Fashion Interest, which was the name adopted earlier this year by the large group of artists, architects, stylists, musicians, and sculptors who contribute ideas to the store. It is run by Ana Gonzalez, a spiky-haired Filipina, who describes her background as being in philosophy, and by Kruger and Hearn, both of whom are rather earnest twenty-something architects trained at the Rhode Island School of Design. Actually, saying that these three run ORFI may be a bit of an overstatement, since the roles played by the members of the collective are deliberately left vague. "Design with a capital 'D' revolves around ego with a capital 'E,'" Kruger says. "We're trying to leave ego out of it."

ORFI clothes are almost brutally straightforward: well made, comfortable, roomy, in soft natural fabrics and basic colors, with the sophistication of each piece obvious only in discrete, carefully thought-out details—a mesh pocket for a Palm Pilot, for instance, or a zipper on a blackout sweatshirt which continues all the way around the hood. The group doesn't like the notion of "design" as a self-conscious, independent act. Hearn, Kruger, and Gonzalez relish the nitty-gritty of making clothes, of working with suppliers and manufacturers, of forging a kind of intimacy with the artisans and craftspeople of the production process. "I can almost imagine doing away with design," Hearn says. "If you could do that, we could still work. Design is the least interesting part of it." If there is an irony to this, of course, it is that design was initially brought into production for the very reason that ORFI now wants to take it out: to make fashion real and essential and personal. But that was a long time ago, and in fashion everything is eventually turned on its head, including the rationale for fashion itself. "We believe that fashion is about communities," the ORFI mission statement says. And then, again, "We feel that architecture, fashion and city planning are all part of the same project." And, again, "We are extremely realistic, data-oriented and optimistic to the point of being boring (radical)." —MALCOLM GLADWELL

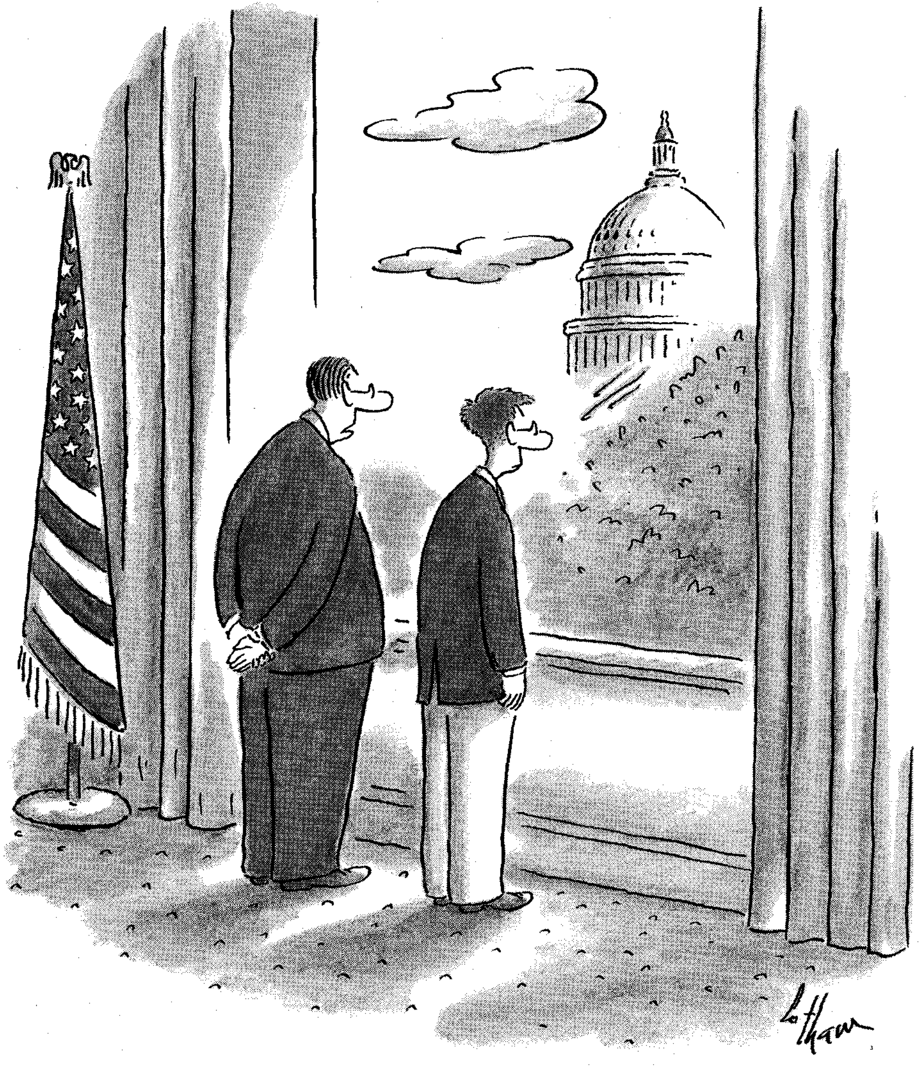
ANJA KROENCKE

ter—essentially a mile-wide mountain of stainless steel and precious metals, mostly gold and platinum. Ostro advised Benson that a scientist at the United States Geological Survey was already putting together an economic model of how mining asteroids might affect the global metals market, and he directed Benson to John S. Lewis, the co-director of the Space Engineering Research Center at the University of Arizona, who had written a book called "Mining the Sky." Lewis convinced Benson that in the right political and economic climate the industrialization of outer space was not only imaginable but practicable with existing technology; that a new, off-Earth economy was waiting to be ignited; and that an extraordinary amount of money was waiting to be made.

"We are in a Darwinian mode," Lewis told me. "Today, everything is an intelligence test. If you find yourselves simply perpetuating the status quo, then you are dying. . . . The technical problems are secondary. This country has a huge reservoir of expertise in launching space missions, huge reserves of people laid off by the space and defense industries, people chomping at the bit." Lewis went on, "The supposed limits of growth are based largely upon false assumptions. . . . Because the space age was developed between mortal enemies—capitalism and Communism—it got us into a deep rut. It's great to jump-start space by having it as a national goal. But when the government can't let go that kills it. In the Second World War, the government dominated all kinds of aircraft. One of the reasons for America's powerful position in the modern world is that the aircraft industry successfully stepped out from under government domination. Space could have done the same thing, and it still can, but the government has bitterly opposed losing its monopoly."

Benson had heard his calling. He moved quickly to incorporate SpaceDev, installed himself as chairman and C.E.O., and acquired Integrated Space Systems, a San Diego aerospace-engineering company that had been doing spacecraft design and analysis work for Lockheed. SpaceDev has since purchased Space Innovations Limited, a spacecraft-and-satellite-products company, and the technology patents of American Rocket. Today, SpaceDev is the only company in the world with the ability to design its own space mission, build its own craft, and get it up in the air with its own rockets.

AMONG the top scientists that Benson assembled was Tony Spear, a thirty-six-year veteran of NASA, where he served as project manager for the Mars Pathfinder. Spear is an articulate and clear-eyed spokesman for space exploration, and he is a bridge between its past and its future. He says that aerospace equipment, like computer hardware, has become exponentially better, cheaper, and faster over the last fifteen years. "Benson is on the verge of a major breakthrough in spacecraft technology," Spear told me. "In five years or so, spacecraft costs are going to plummet to the point where whole spacecraft and associated ground systems are going to cost less than ten million dollars. Universities can have their own spacecraft. Mexico can have a spacecraft. But there's a fine line between being merely low-cost and irresponsible versus extremely cost-effective." Spear added, "There is an established way for you to do deep-space exploration, and that establishment has a lot of history and trial and error. . . . In the process of cutting out the fat, you can cut into the meat and make mistakes." When he talked about Benson, Spear, like many of the space veterans I spoke with, could barely contain his excitement. "Scientists in general are hoping and praying that he makes it—that he opens up low-cost opportunities for scientists to jump on board without all of the paperwork and all the bullshit that they have to go through right now," Spear said, and then paused, as if making an effort to rein in his enthusiasm. He was most impressed, he went on to say, by Benson's



"Someday, son, all my campaign funds will be yours."

insistence on identifying the most successful space missions and recruiting the men and women who had made them so. But the principal attraction for Spear is not science or academic recognition. "If I'm going to work for him," Spear told me bluntly, "he's going to have to make me very rich." At present, though, SpaceDev stock, which is traded on the NASDAQ, fluctuates wildly, reflecting the uncertainties of both a volatile market and a brand-new industry.

MONEY matters to Benson, too, but so does the vision. For all his talk of the bottom line, what he sees first when he looks at space is a sanctuary from mankind's ecological despoliation of the home planet. He loves to talk about how globalization has made Earth psychologically small, and how, as its population approaches twelve billion, there will be nowhere to go but up. He believes that only the drive and ingenuity of the private sector will get us there. Yet he also knows that there are risks in commercializing space, and unresolved questions of ownership and regulation. Existing space law was left purposely vague and toothless by its major signatories: the 1967 United Nations Outer Space Treaty does not address the issue of natural resources in space.

This is the one topic that makes Benson testy. "Look, I've got three pieces that I'm juggling," he told me. "The business part of this has to be absolutely solid, impeccable. There's got to be a return on the investment or it's never going to happen. That's absolutely Rule Number One. . . . Then, there's the wonder of space and the enormity of it, and how little we know and how much more there is to learn." The testiness gave way to enthusiasm as he continued, "The third part of it is that I will pursue them"—resources in space—"but I won't be cheapened by gold mines in the sky." But, I asked, what is to prevent these extraterrestrial colonies from resembling Dickensian London, or the squalor of gold-rush California? "These colonies are going to grow like boom towns," Benson admitted. "There is going to be no planning. It will be an economic workhouse. You're going to wind up with prostitutes in space and blue-collar workers and office workers, and people are going to die, they are going to be killed, and we are going to find places to squeeze people into some tuna can up there."

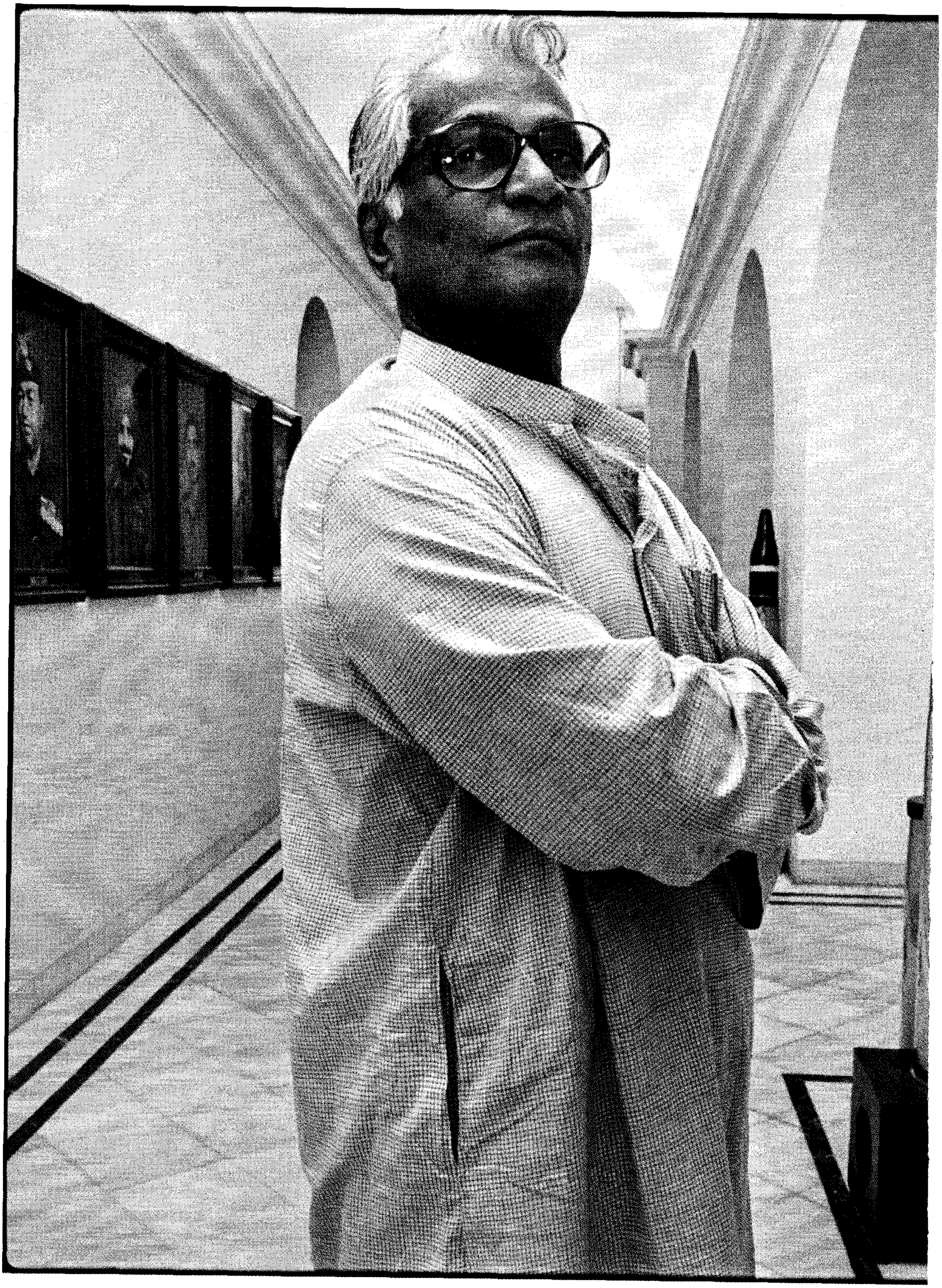
When I asked Dan Goldin if he had any concerns about a private corporation launching a business in virgin space, he replied, defensively, with a question of his own: "Is it greed when someone wants to create opportunity? There's a fuzzy area as to who owns what. I don't see it as greed—I see it as man going for it, a real possibility for our progeny." Reddening, and clasping and unclasping his hands, he continued, "There are people throughout history who know with certainty what can't be done. They know it, feel it in their hearts. These are not the people who created the opportunity. These are not the pioneers—the ones who made fortunes, lost them, and made them again. These are not the people who died trying to make something happen. Jim Benson is necessary for progress. . . . He has the unmitigated gall to step up and say, 'I'm going to do it. Stop me if you can.' "

After a speech Benson gave last spring at a conference of aerospace engineers in Albuquerque, I was taken aside by a man named David Livingston. Livingston, a business consultant from San Francisco, makes his living in import-export, but has also been one of the first businessmen to think seriously about corporate behavior in space. Livingston, who is forty-three, diminutive and friendly, had been listening to Benson with a combination of suspicion and grudging admiration. "What comes off this Earth is us, a reflection of us," he said. "Someday, colonies will be self-supporting. Someday, they may be their own states or their own nations, and may be connected to Earth only in the way that Puerto Rico or Guam is connected to the United States. They are going to be extensions of us, with sovereignty. Is our greed in business so ingrained in us now, is our corruption, our lack of values, our lack of spiritual values, our lack of humanity? Is that the side of us that is going to go out into space? Is it profits, and damn everything else?"

IN June, at SpaceDev's headquarters, in San Diego, I sat in on a brainstorming session to which Benson had summoned eight current and prospective advisers in order to weigh, among other things, the advantages of flying a safer (i.e., longer and less ambitious) mission versus a riskier, quicker one. Don Yeomans, who is the senior research scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, said he wondered whether SpaceDev should play it conservatively the first time out—an asteroid flyby rather than an actual rendezvous. Everyone listened carefully. Yeomans is a crucial part of the venture, an ambassador to the aerospace cultures in government and academia. "If we go flying by an asteroid, the public's going to be yawning," Benson said, tapping his pencil in irritation. "If we're successful in this, we can do anything." But Yeomans continued to voice objections to everything from the flight path to Benson's choice of asteroid. Jim Arnold, a former Apollo mission planner and the director of the California Space Institute, and one of Benson's early champions, shook his head and muttered, "Look, nobody's ever done this before. You haven't done this before. We haven't done this before. Everything that gets done gets done for the first time."

"In or out?" someone asked Yeomans. Yeomans didn't hesitate. "Oh, yes. I'm in," he said, nodding. Phil Smith, SpaceDev's chief operating officer, leaned over to Bob Farquhar, the mission designer of the Applied Physics Lab at Johns Hopkins and the mission manager of NASA's CONTOUR mission, which is due to launch in 2002. In 1985, he designed the first mission to a comet. "How many science decisions have you made based on the stock market?" Smith asked, smiling ruefully. Within an hour after the meeting, Farquhar was talking about signing a contract with Benson, though in the end they failed to come to terms.

"Nobody thought you could break the four-minute mile until somebody did it, and then it became fairly commonplace," Benson said to me later. "It was more psychological than anything. If we break this four-minute mile of space, go out and make some money doing something practical that is needed in an existing market, all hell is going to break loose. . . . I don't know what's going to happen, but at least I will have the satisfaction of knowing that I started something." ♦



MAGNUM

A REPORTER AT LARGE

COUNTDOWN

Why can't every country have the bomb?

BY AMITAV GHOSH

On May 11th, the Indian government tested several nuclear devices at a site near the small medieval town of Pokharan, on the edge of the Thar Desert, in the western state of Rajasthan. I travelled to the area three months later. My visit coincided with the fifty-first anniversary of independence, the start of India's second half century as a free nation. As I was heading toward Pokharan, the Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, was addressing the nation from the ramparts of Delhi's Red Fort—an Independence Day tradition. Driving through the desert, I listened to him on the car radio.

Vajpayee belongs to the Bharatiya Janata Party (the B.J.P., or the Indian People's Party), which is the largest single group in the coalition that now rules India. The B.J.P. came to power in March, and the Pokharan tests followed two months later. The tests occasioned outpourings of joy among the B.J.P.'s members and sympathizers. They organized festivities and handed out sweetmeats on the streets to commemorate the achievement. There was talk of sending sand from the test site around the country so that the whole nation could partake of the glow from the blasts. Some of the B.J.P.'s leaders were said to be thinking of building a monument at Pokharan, a "shrine of strength" that could be visited by pilgrims. Nine days after the first tests, the Prime Minister flew to Pokharan himself. A celebration was organized near the crater left by the blasts. The Prime Minister was photographed standing on the crater's rim, looking reverentially into the pit.

But now, three months later, speaking at Red Fort, the Prime Minister's voice sounded oddly subdued. The euphoria had faded. On May 28th, Pakistan had tested its own nuclear devices. This had had a sobering effect. In the following weeks, the rupee fell to a historic low, the stock-market index fell, prices soared. The B.J.P.'s grasp on power was now none too secure.

I was travelling to Pokharan with two men whom I'd met that morning. They were landowning farmers who had relatives in the town. A friend had assigned them the task of showing me around. One man was in his sixties, with hennaed hair and a bushy mustache. The other was his son-in-law, a soft-spoken, burly man in his early forties. Their Hindi had the distinctive lilt of western Rajasthan.

It was searingly hot, and the desert wind chafed like sandpaper against our eyes. The road was a long, shimmering line. There were peafowl in the thorny trees, and the birds took wing as the car shot past, their great tails iridescent in the sunlight. Otherwise, there was nothing but scrub to interrupt the view of the horizon. In the dialect of the region, my guides told me, this area was known as "the flatland."

In Pokharan, my guides were welcomed by their acquaintances. A town official said he knew exactly the man I ought to meet. This man was sent for. His name was Manohar Joshi, and he was thirty-six, bespectacled, with a ready smile. He'd grown up in Pokharan, he told me. He was twelve in 1974, when a nuclear device was first tested in the district. The Prime Minister then was Indira Gandhi.

"In the years after 1974, there was a lot of illness," Joshi said. "We had never heard of cancer before. But after the test people began to get cancer. There were strange skin diseases. Sores. And people used to scratch themselves all the

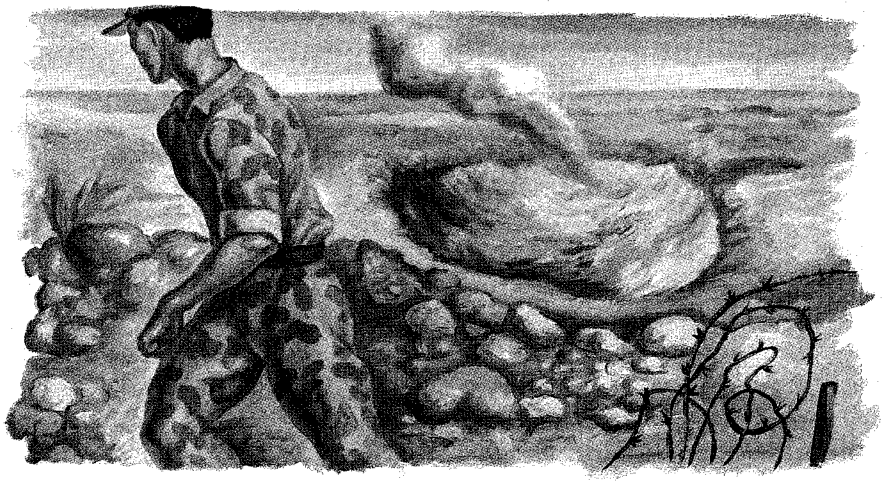
PHOTOGRAPH BY RAGHU RAI

George Fernandes, India's Defense Minister: An atom bomb is morally unacceptable. But why should the nations that have nuclear weapons tell India how to behave?

time. If these things had happened anywhere else in the country, in Bihar or Kashmir, people would rise up and stop it. But people here don't protest. They'll put up with anything."

Growing up in Pokharan, Joshi had developed a strong interest in nuclear matters. His family hadn't had the resources to send him to college. After high school, he'd started to work in a shop. But all the while he'd wanted to write. He'd begun to send opinion pieces to Hindi newspapers. One of them had taken him on as a stringer.

On the afternoon of May 11th, he was preparing for his siesta when the ground began to shake, almost throwing him off his cot. He knew at once that this was no earthquake. It was a more powerful jolt than that of 1974. He recognized it for what it was and called his paper immediately. This, Joshi said proudly, made him the first journalist in the world to learn of the tests.



A celebration was organized near the blast crater. There was talk of sending sand from the test site around the country so that the whole nation could partake of the glow.

Joshi told me about a village called Khetolai. It was just six miles from the test site, the nearest human habitation. The effects of the 1974 tests had been felt more severely there, he said, than anywhere else in the district.

We drove off into the scrub, along a dirt road. The village was small, but there were no huts or shanties: the houses were sturdily built, of stone and mortar.

Khetolai was an unusual village, Joshi explained. Its inhabitants were reasonably prosperous—they made their living mainly from the tending of livestock—and almost everyone was literate, women as well as men. Many were Bishnois, members of a small religious sect whose founder had forbidden the felling of trees and the killing of animals. They thought of themselves as the world's first conservationists.

We stopped to look at a couple of buildings whose walls had been split by the tests, and we were immediately surrounded by eager schoolchildren. They led us into a house where three turbaned elders were sitting on charpoys, talking.

On May 11th, at about noon, they told me, a squad of soldiers drove up and asked the villagers to move to open ground. People who owned refrigerators and television sets carried them out-of-doors and set them down in the sand. Then they sat under trees and waited. It was very hot. The temperature was over 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

Some three and a half hours later, there was a tremendous shaking in the ground and a booming noise. They saw a great cloud of dust and black and white smoke shooting skyward in the distance. Cracks opened up in the walls of the houses. Some had underground water tanks for livestock. The blasts split the tanks, emptying them of water.

Later, the villagers said, an official came around and offered them small sums of money as compensation. The underground tanks had been very expensive. The villagers refused to accept the money and demanded more.

Party activists appeared and erected a colorful marquee. There was talk that the B.J.P. would hold celebrations in Khetolai. By this time, the villagers were enraged, and the marquee was removed, for fear that the media would hear of the villagers' complaints.

"After the test," a young man said, "the Prime Minister announced that he'd been to Pokharan and that there was no radioactivity. But how long was he here? Radioactivity doesn't work in minutes." Since 1974, he said, some twenty children had been born with deformed limbs. Cows had developed tumors in their udders. According to the young man, calves were born blind, or with their tongues and eyes attached to the wrong parts of their faces. No one had heard of such things before.

The young man held a clerical job for the government. He was articulate, and the elders handed him the burden of the conversation. In the past, he said, the villagers had coöperated with the government. They hadn't complained and they'd been careful when talking to the press. "But now we are fed up. What benefits do we get from these tests? We don't even have a hospital."

Someone brought a tray of water glasses. The young man saw me hesitate and began to laugh. "Outsiders won't drink our water," he said. "Even the people who come to tell us that everything is safe won't touch our water."

My guides were subdued on the drive back. Even though they lived in the neighboring district, it had been years since they were last in Pokharan. What we'd seen had come as a complete surprise to them.

I spent the rest of the day in the town of Bikaner, about a hundred miles away. That evening, I walked around its royal palace. It was vast, empty, and beautiful, like a melancholy fantasy. Its pink stone seemed to turn translucent in the light of the setting sun. The palace was of a stupefying lavishness. It was built around the turn of the century by Maharaja Sir Ganga Singh of Bikaner—a luminary who had cut a very splendid figure in the British Raj. He had entertained viceroys and sent troops to Flanders. He was a signatory of the Treaty of Versailles. There were photographs in the corridors showing Maharaja Ganga Singh in the company of Churchill, Woodrow Wilson, and Lloyd George.

In New Delhi, many people had talked to me about how nuclear weapons would help India achieve "great power status." I'd been surprised by the depth of emotion that was invested in that curiously archaic phrase "great

ILLUSTRATIONS BY OWEN SMITH

power." What exactly would it mean, I'd asked myself, if India achieved "great power status"? What were the images that were evoked by this tag?

Now, walking through this echoing old palace, looking at the pictures in the corridors, it occurred to me that this was what the nuclearists wanted: treaties, photographs of themselves with the world's powerful, portraits on their walls. They had pinned on the bomb their hopes of bringing it all back.

THE leading advocate of India's nuclear policies is K. Subrahmanyam, a large, forceful man, who is the retired director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, in New Delhi. Subrahmanyam advocates an aggressive nuclear program based on the premise that nuclear weapons are the currency of global power. "Nuclear weapons are not military weapons," he told me. "Their logic is that of international politics and it is a logic of a global nuclear order." According to Subrahmanyam, international security has been progressively governed by a global nuclear order made up of the five nuclear-weapons powers—the United States, Russia, China, Britain, and France. "India," Subrahmanyam said, "wants to be a player and not an object of this global nuclear order."

I had expected to hear about regional threats and the Chinese missile program. But, as Subrahmanyam sees it, India's nuclear policies are only tangentially related to the question of India's security. They are ultimately aimed at something much more abstract and very much more grand: global power. India could, if it plays its cards right, parlay its nuclear program into a seat on the United Nations Security Council and earn recognition as a "global player."

Subrahmanyam told me a story about a film. It was called "The Million-Pound Note" and it featured Gregory Peck. In the film, Peck's character uses an obviously valueless piece of paper printed to look like a million-pound note to con tradesmen into extending credit.

"A nuclear weapon acts like a million-pound note," Subrahmanyam said, his eyes gleaming. "It is of no apparent use. You can't use it to stop small wars. But it buys you credit, and that gives you the power to intimidate."

Subrahmanyam bristled when I suggested that there might be certain inherent dangers to the possession of nuclear weapons. Like most Indian hawks, he considers himself a reluctant nuclearist. He says he would prefer to see nuclear weapons done away with altogether. It is the nuclear superpowers' insistence on maintaining their arsenals that makes this impossible.

Issues of safety, he told me, were no more pressing in India than anywhere else. India and Pakistan had lived with each other's nuclear programs for many years. "It was the strategic logic of the West that was madness. Think of the United States' building seventy thousand nuclear weapons at a cost of $5.8 trillion. Do you think these people are in a position to preach to us?"

Subrahmanyam, like many other supporters of the Indian nuclear program, sees little danger of the deployment of nuclear weapons. In New Delhi, it is widely believed that the very immensity of the destructive potential of nuclear weapons renders them useless as instruments of war, insuring that their deployment can never be anything other than symbolic. That nuclear war is unthinkable has, paradoxically, given the weapons an aura of harmlessness.

I went to see an old acquaintance, Chandan Mitra, a historian with an Oxford doctorate. I had come across an editorial of his entitled "Explosion of Self-Esteem," published on May 12th. At Delhi University, when I first knew Chandan, he was a Marxist. He is now an influential newspaper editor, and is said to be a B.J.P. sympathizer.

"The bomb is a currency of self-esteem," Chandan told me, with disarming bluntness. "Two hundred years of colonialism robbed us of our self-esteem. We do not have the national pride that the British have, or the French, the Germans, or the Americans. We have been told that we are not fit to rule ourselves—that was the justification of colonialism. Our achievements, our worth, our talent have always been negated and denied. Mahatma Gandhi's endeavor all during the freedom movement was to rebuild our sense of self-esteem. Even if you don't have guns, he said, you still have moral force. Now, fifty years on, we know that moral force isn't enough to survive. It doesn't count for very much. When you look at India today and ask how best you can overcome those feelings of inferiority, the bomb seems to be as good an answer as any."

For Chandan, as for many other Indians, the bomb is more than a weapon. It has become a banner of political insurgency, a kind of millenarian movement for all the unfulfilled aspirations and dreams of the last fifty years.

The landscape of India teems with such insurgencies: the country is seized, in V. S. Naipaul's eloquent phrase, with "a million mutinies now." These insurrections are perhaps the most remarkable product of Indian democracy: this enabling of once marginal groups to fight for places at the table of power. The bomb cult represents the uprising of those who find themselves being pushed back from the table. It's the rebellion of the rebelled against, an insurgency of an élite. Its leaders see themselves as articulating the aspirations of an immeasurably vast constituency: more than nine hundred million people, or "one-sixth of humanity," in the words of the Indian Prime Minister. The reality, however, is that the number is very much smaller than this and is dwindling every day. The almost mystical rapture that greeted the unveiling of the cult's fetish has long since dissipated.

While in New Delhi, I visited the Lok Sabha, the lower house of India's parliament, to watch a debate on foreign-policy consequences of the nuclear tests. Most of the speakers were vociferously critical of the government for permitting the tests. Several of the speeches were ringing denunciations of the B.J.P.'s nuclear policies. Later, I went to see one of the speakers, Ram Vilas Paswan. Paswan is a Dalit—a member of a caste group that was once treated as untouchable by high-caste Hindus. He holds the distinction of winning his parliamentary seat by record margins and is something of a cultural hero among many of the country's two hundred and thirty million Dalits.

Paswan is a wiry man with a close-cropped beard and gold-rimmed eyeglasses. "These nuclear tests were not in the Indian national interest," he told me. "They were done in the interests of a party, to keep the present government from imploding. In the last elections in Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif campaigned on a platform of better relations with India. For this he was pilloried by his opponent, Benazir Bhutto, but he still won. The people of Pakistan want friendship with India. But how did our government respond? It burst a bomb in the face of a man who had reached out to us in friendship. And this in a country where ordinary citizens don't have food to eat. Where villages are being washed away by floods. Where two hundred million people don't have safe drinking water. Instead, we spend thirty-five thousand crores of rupees a year"—about eight billion dollars—"on armaments."

On August 6th, Hiroshima Day, I was in Calcutta. More than two hundred and fifty thousand people marched in the streets to protest the nuclear tests of May 11th. It was plain that the cult of the bomb had few adherents here, that the tests had divided the country more deeply than ever.

In New Delhi, I went to see George Fernandes, the Defense Minister of India.

I have known Fernandes, from a distance, for many years. He has a long history of involvement in human-rights causes, and when I was a student at Delhi University he was one of India's best-known antinuclear activists.

New Delhi is a sprawling city of some ten million people, but its government offices and institutions are concentrated in a small area. The capital was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, in the waning years of the British Raj. Two gargantuan buildings form the bureaucratic core of the city. They are known simply as North Block and South Block and they face each other across a broad boulevard. The buildings are of red sandstone and are ornamented with many turrets and gateways of Anglo-Oriental design. From this fantastically grandiose complex the power of the Indian state radiates outward in diminishing circles of effectiveness.

I was taken to Fernandes's office, in South Block, by Jaya Jaitly, the general secretary of Fernandes's political party, the Samata (Equality) Party. The idea of my striding into the Defense Ministry was no more unlikely than the thought that these offices were presided over by George Fernandes, that perennially indignant activist.

At the age of sixteen, Fernandes, who had harbored ambitions of becoming a Catholic priest, joined a lay seminary. At nineteen, he left, disillusioned (he remembers being appalled that the rectors ate better food and sat at higher tables than the seminarians), and went to Bombay, where he joined the socialist trade-union movement. For years he had no permanent address and lived with members of his union on the outskirts of the city. Disowned by his father, he did not visit his home again until he was in his forties.

Fernandes still considers himself a socialist. In India's most recent elections, last February, the Samata Party won a mere twelve seats out of a total of five hundred and forty-five. There was a time when the Congress—the party of Mahatma Gandhi—regularly commanded a decisive majority. But today no single party controls a sufficient number of seats to form a stable government. The country has gone to the polls twice in the last three years. Last February's elections gave the B.J.P., with a hundred and eighty-one seats, a slight edge over the Congress. For the first time, the B.J.P. was able to form a government, but only after fashioning a coalition with smaller parties. (The Samata Party entered on very advantageous terms, securing two positions in the Cabinet, Fernandes's included.) The B.J.P.'s program is based on an assertive, militant Hinduism. In 1992, members of the B.J.P. were instrumental in organizing the demolition of a sixteenth-century mosque that stood upon a site that they believed to be sacred to Hindus. In the aftermath, there were riots across the Indian subcontinent and thousands of people died.

We went up to Fernandes's office in the Minister's elevator. A soldier in sparkling white puttees and a red turban pressed the buttons.

Fernandes is sixty-eight but could pass for a man in his mid-forties—lean, with a full head of curly graying hair. He always dresses in long, handwoven cotton kurtas and loose pajamas. He wears leather sandals—no socks or shoes—and washes his clothes by hand.

Two officers marched in, and Fernandes turned to talk to them. It was clear at a glance that, despite Fernandes's sandals and rumpled clothes and the officers' heel-clicking starchiness, there was a genuine warmth between him and the soldiers. It occurred to me that Fernandes, too, wore a kind of uniform. It was a statement of simplicity.

The room was large but dank. Two pictures hung high on a wall. One was a portrait of Mahatma Gandhi; the other was a photograph of the ruins of a church in Hiroshima. It was probably here, at this desk, under these pictures, that Fernandes had deliberated on the tests of May 11th.

I thought back to India's first atomic test. I was eighteen, in my second year at Delhi University. The voices of dissent were few: all the major political parties, right and left alike, came out in support. Fernandes was one of the very few political figures who openly criticized the test. For those such as myself, people who were opposed to nuclear armaments in an instinctive, perhaps unreflective way, Fernandes became a kind of beacon.

It was lunchtime, and Fernandes led the way to a spiral staircase. I spotted a small, simian figure observing us from a landing. I stopped, startled. It was a monkey, a common rhesus, with a muddy-brown mantle and a bright-red rump. The animal stared at me calmly, unalarmed, and then went bounding off down a corridor.

"Did you see that monkey?" I said.

Fernandes laughed. "Yes. There's a whole troop living on this staircase."

"Sometimes," one of his aides whispered, "they attack the generals."

At lunch, I said to Fernandes, "Are you comfortable with the recent nuclear tests? I ask you this because I have read your antinuclear writings and seen you at peace marches."

"I was opposed to the bomb from Day One till the nineteenth of July, 1996," Fernandes said. On that day, the Lok Sabha was debating the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty banning further tests. "In these discussions there was one point of unanimity: that we should not sign this treaty. I went through deep anguish—an atom bomb was morally unacceptable. But why should the five nations that have nuclear weapons tell us how to behave and what weapons we should have? I said we should keep all our options open—every option." The implication was that, even then, he hadn't been able to endorse nuclear weapons.

After lunch, as he was rising to leave, Fernandes told me that he was scheduled to visit military installations in the embattled state of Kashmir. From there, he planned to fly farther north, to Ladakh and the Siachen Glacier, in the Karakoram Mountains. Across these snows, at altitudes of up to twenty-two thousand feet, Indian and Pakistani troops have been exchanging fire regularly for fourteen years. The trip was to be a tour of inspection, but Fernandes would also address some political meetings. If I wanted to join him, he said, I should tell his office.

ON the morning of August 24th, I boarded an Indian Air Force plane with Fernandes and his entourage. The plane was a twin-engine AN-32, an elderly and unabashedly functional craft of Soviet manufacture.

We stopped for lunch at a large military base in eastern Kashmir. I found myself sharing a table with several major generals and other senior officers. I was interested to learn these senior officers' views of the nuclear tests, but I soon discovered that their curiosity exceeded mine. Did I know who was behind the decision to proceed with the tests? they asked. Who had issued the orders? Who had known in advance?

I could no more enlighten them than they could me. Only in India, I thought, could a writer and a tableful of generals ask each other questions like these. It was confirmation, at any rate, that the armed forces' role in the tests had been limited.

The views of the military personnel were by no means uniform. Many believed that India needed a nuclear deterrent; some felt that the tests had resulted in security benefits for both India and Pakistan—that the two countries would now exercise greater caution in their frequent border confrontations.

But others expressed apprehensions. "An escalation of hostilities along the border can happen very easily," a major-general said to me. "It takes just one officer in the field to start it off. There's no telling where it will stop."

None of the generals, I was relieved to note, appeared to believe that nuclear weapons were harmless icons of empowerment. In the light of my earlier conversations, there was something almost reassuring in this.

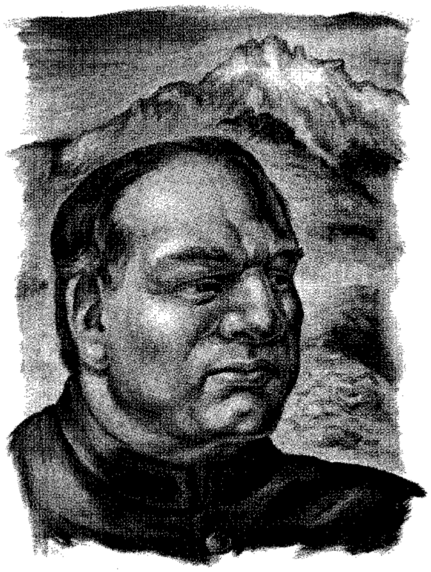
After lunch, we went by helicopter to Surankote, an Army base in the neck of territory that connects Kashmir to India. It was set in a valley, between steep, verdant hills. The sunlight glowed golden and mellow on the surrounding slopes. We were whisked off the landing pad and taken to the base. I found myself riding in a vehicle with a young major.

"What's it like here?" I said.

"Bad." He laughed. "Bordering on terrible." The Pakistani front lines were just a few miles away, he explained. It took just a day to walk over the hills.

At the base, there was a crowd of a few hundred people. Fernandes had mounted a podium with several other politicians and local dignitaries. Behind them were green hills, capped by clouds.

The major pointed at the hills. "While we're standing here talking, there are half a dozen operations going on in those hills, right there."



Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of Pakistan. He wanted better relations with India.

He led me aside. "Let the politicians talk," he said. "I'll show you what's happening here if you want to know." We went into a tent and the major seated himself at a radio set. "This is where we listen to them," he said. He scanned the wavelengths, tuning in to several exchanges. "Listen," he said, turning up the volume. "They're speaking Punjabi, not Kashmiri. They're mercenaries who've signed up on two-year contracts. They're right there, in those hills."

The voices on the radio had a slow, dreamlike quality; they were speaking to each other unhurriedly, calling out cheerful greetings in slow-cadenced rural Punjabi.

As we were leaving the tent, the major darted suddenly into a group of journalists and took some rolls of film from a photographer. "I don't know what they've taken pictures of," he said. "I can't trust anyone here."

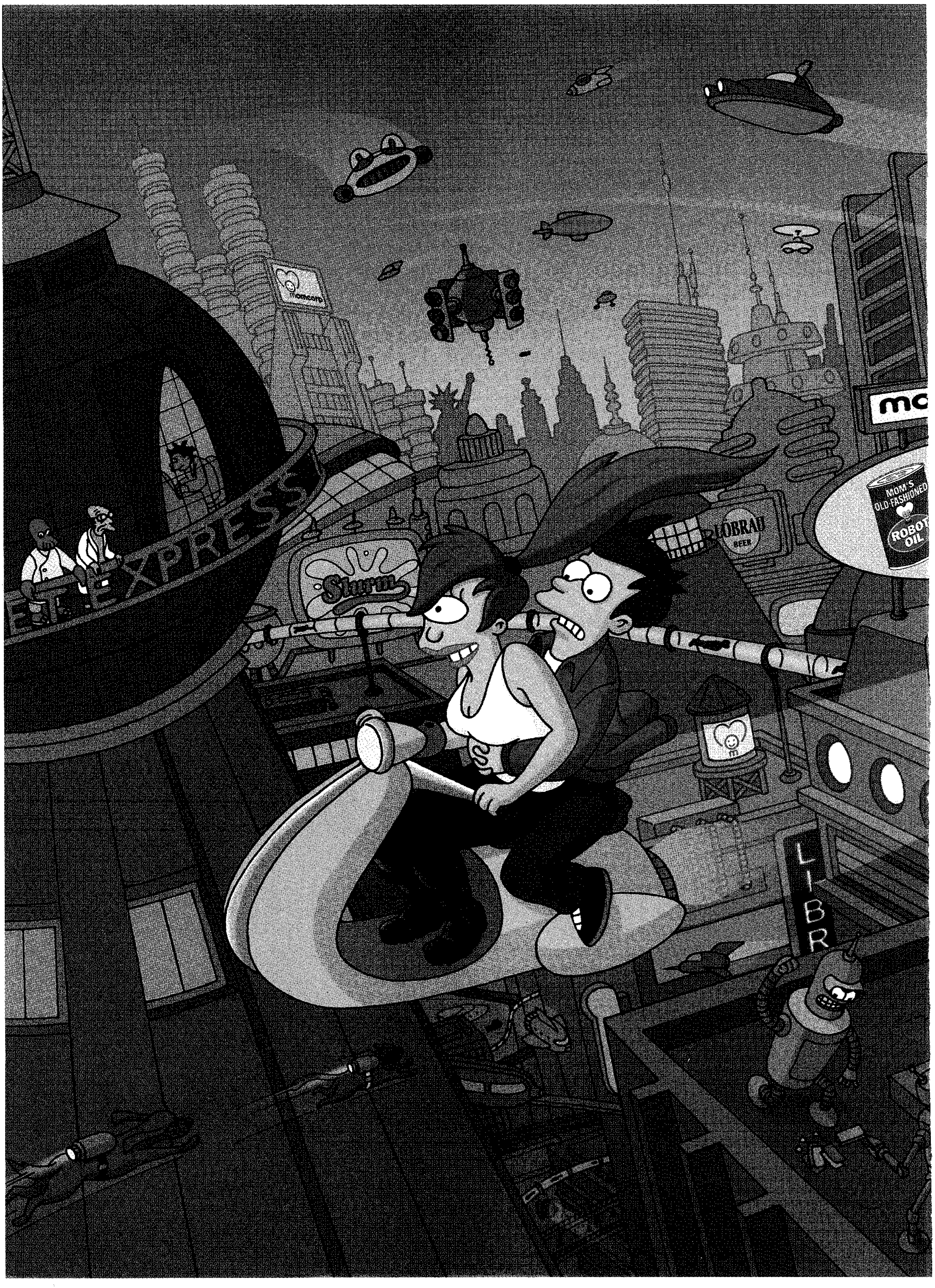
We walked back to listen to the speeches. "The politicians talk so well," the major said. "But what we have is a war. Does anyone know that? Does anyone care?"

THE next day, we flew to Leh, the principal town in the Himalayan region of Ladakh. Ladakh is only a few hundred miles from the valley of Kashmir, but near Leh, in the east, it is a world apart, a niche civilization—a far outpost of Buddhist culture which has flourished in a setting as extreme, in climate, altitude, and topography, as that of Tibet.

Leh is at eleven thousand five hundred feet. On landing, we were handed pills to prevent altitude sickness and warned of short-term memory loss. In the afternoon, driving toward the Siachen Glacier, we went over the eighteen-thousand-three-hundred-foot Khardung Pass. A painted sign announced this to be the world's highest motorable road. Ahead lay the Karakoram Range. Among the peaks in this range is the twenty-eight-thousand-two-hundred-and-fifty-foot K2, Mt. Godwin Austen, the second-highest mountain in the world.

The landscape was one of lunar desolation, with electric-blue skies and a blinding sun. Great sheets of glaciated rock rose sheer out of narrow valleys: their colors were the unearthly pinks and mauves of planetary rings and stellar moons. The mountains had sharp, pyramidal points, their ridges honed to fine, knifelike edges. Below, along the valley floors, beside ribbonlike streams, were trees with silver bark. On occasional sandbanks, dwarfed by the vastness of the landscape, were tidy monasteries and villages.

The Siachen Glacier is known as the Third Pole. Outside of the polar wastelands, there is perhaps no terrain on earth that is less hospitable. There are no demarcated borders. Kashmir has what was once called the Cease Fire Line,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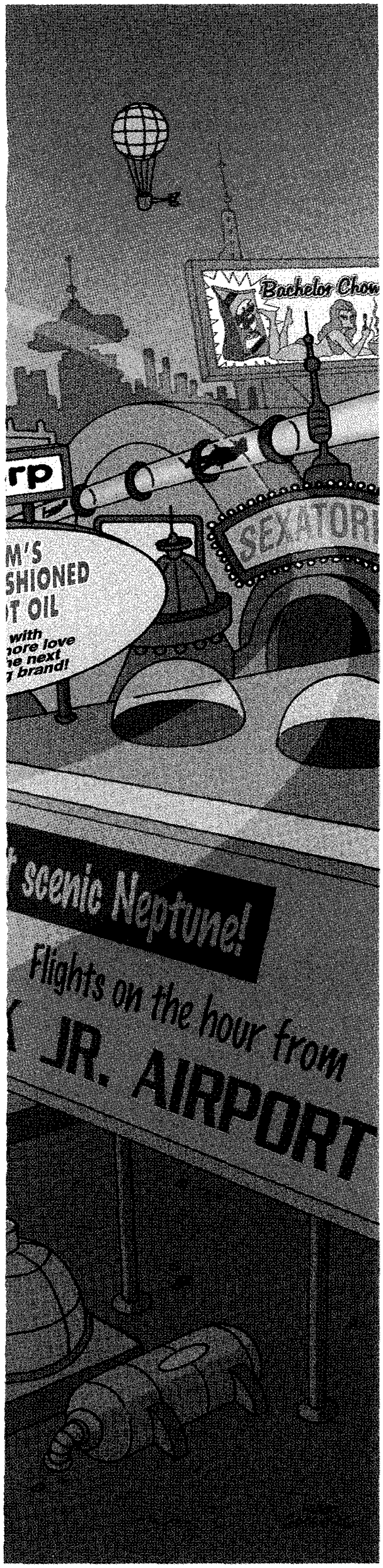

FORECAST

FLASH-FORWARD

To Matt Groening, creator of the "Life in Hell" comic strip and of "The Simpsons," the future, like the present, is a dark journey lit by cheap satisfactions. In his new series, "Futurama," airing this January on Fox, a twenty-five-year-old pizza-delivery boy named Fry is accidentally cryogenically frozen in 1999—it could happen—and wakes up in the ruins of Manhattan in the year 3000. There he finds that mankind remains just as greedy and conniving and in thrall to greasy pizza as ever. Earth's villain is an insatiable capitalist named Mom, and even the aliens don't want to conquer us so much as win market share for their addictive soft drink, Slurm. That's all just fine with Fry; alongside his curvy, one-eyed alien sidekick, Leela, he's content delivering packages around the galaxy for Planet Express and cruising for interstellar babes. (There's a lot of sex in the future, though the over-all desirability quotient is somewhat constrained by Groening's animation style, which he terms "big eyes and alarming overbites.")

Fry's learning curve is soothingly low: in a thousand years man has invented nothing that would puzzle Flash Gordon. It's a populuxe world of hover cars, jet packs, ray guns, holographic videophones, a warp-speed option on spaceships ("convenience drive"), even a mad scientist known as the Professor. "This is a future you've seen before," Groening acknowledges. "It's straight out of science-fiction movies from the nineteen-forties to the sixties—my favorite future."

Groening has added a few small, personal innovations. As a child, he suffered recurrent nightmares in which robots sought to kill him. "Futurama" bristles with robots, but they've been humanized: Fry's robot friend Bender dreams of becoming a gourmet chef, if he could only acquire taste buds. Luminaries such as Dick Clark live on as disembodied heads in jars—an apt pickling of celebrities who outstay their welcome. "And the best part about my future," Groening says happily, "is that 'The Simpsons' is still on the air—with new episodes."

—Tad Friend

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which serves as a de-facto border, but it stops short of this region, ending at a point on the map known as NJ 9842. The line was created in 1949, after the first war between India and Pakistan. At the time, neither India nor Pakistan conceived of needing to extend it into the high Karakorams, beyond NJ 9842. "No one had ever imagined," a Pakistani academic told me later, when I visited Lahore, "that human beings would ever wish to claim these frozen places."

But in the late nineteen-seventies several international mountaineering expeditions ventured into this region. They came through Pakistan and used Pakistani-controlled areas as their trailheads. This raised suspicions in India. It was discovered that maps were being published with lines drawn through the region, suggesting delineated borders where none existed. There was talk of "cartographic aggression."

It was these notional lines, on maps used by mountaineers, that transformed the Siachen Glacier into a battleground. It is generally agreed that the glacier—an immense mass of compacted snow and ice, seventy miles long and more than a mile deep—has no strategic, military, or economic value whatsoever.

In 1984, the Indian Army launched a large-scale airlifting operation and set up a number of military posts. Pakistan responded by putting up a parallel line of posts. There was no agreement on where the posts should be: shoving was the only way to decide. Since that time, the Indian and Pakistani Armies have regularly exchanged artillery fire at heights that range from ten thousand to twenty thousand feet.

On the glacier, we stopped to visit a dimly lighted hospital ward. There were a dozen men inside. None of them had been injured by "enemy action": their adversary was the terrain. They were plainsmen, mainly. In the normal course of things, snow would play no part in their lives. Most of the men were in their late thirties or early forties—family men. They stared at us mutely. One had tears in his eyes.

Every year, a thousand soldiers are injured on the glacier—about the equivalent of an infantry battalion. "We allow at least ten extra men per battalion for wastage," an officer told me.

At some posts on the glacier, temperatures routinely dip to 40 degrees below zero. At these altitudes, wind velocities are very high. The soldiers spend much of their time crammed inside tents that are pitched on the surface of the glacier or on ledges of rock. Such heat as they have comes from small kerosene stoves, which produce a foul-smelling, grimy kind of soot. The soot works itself slowly into the soldiers' clothes, their hair, their eyes, their nostrils. When they return to base camp after a three-month tour of duty, they are enveloped in black grime.

The Siachen Glacier costs India, I was told, two million dollars a day. The total cost of defending this mass of ice is beyond estimate, but it certainly exceeds several billion dollars.

In the evening, I ate with a group of junior officers. I was interested to note that Indian soldiers always spoke of their Pakistani counterparts with detachment and respect.

"Most of us here are from North India," a blunt-spoken major said to me. "We have more in common with the Pakistanis, if you don't mind my saying so, than we do with South Indians or Bengalis."

The next morning, in a Cheetah helicopter, I followed Fernandes through the gorges that lead up to the glacier. It was cloudy, and the brilliant colors of the rockfaces had the blurred quality of a water-washed print. There was a majesty to the landscape that I had never seen before.

On our return, we drove to the snout of the glacier. A *bara khana*—a kind of feast—had been arranged under an open hangar, in Fernandes's honor. Fernandes left the officers' table and began to serve the other ranks, taking the dishes out of the hands of the kitchen staff. The men were visibly moved, and so was Fernandes. It was clear that in this job—arrived at fortuitously, late in his career—Fernandes had discovered some kind of vocation, a return, perhaps, to the austerity and brotherhood of his days as a seminarian or a trade unionist.

I was introduced to an officer who had just returned from three months on the glacier. He was proud of his men and all they had accomplished: they had dug caves in the ice for shelter, injuries had been kept to a minimum, no one had gone mad. He leaned closer. While on the glacier, he said, he'd thought of a plan for winning the war. He wanted to convey it to the Defense Minister. Could I help?

And the plan? I asked.

A thermonuclear explosion at the bottom of the glacier, a mile deep. The whole thing would melt, he explained, and the resulting flood would carry Pakistan away and put an end to the glacier as well. "We can work wonders."

He'd just come off the glacier, I reminded myself. This was just another kind of altitude sickness.

The next day, sitting in the Air Force plane, I talked to Fernandes about Pakistan. "Isn't it possible for both sides to disengage from the glacier?" I asked. "Can't some sort of solution be worked out?"

"Does anyone really want a solution?" he said quietly. "Things will just go on like this." In his voice there was a note of despair.

I came to be haunted by an image of two desperately poor protagonists, balancing upon a barren mountaintop, each with a pickaxe stuck in the other's neck, each propping the other up, waiting to bleed to death.

In Leh, late one night in an empty dining room, Fernandes made the cryptic comment "There are no Indians left."

"What do you mean?"

"There are no Indian parties today. There are only groups gathered around individuals."

He was referring to the powerful sectional and regional interests that have prevented any stable government from forming, precipitating the several elections in quick succession.

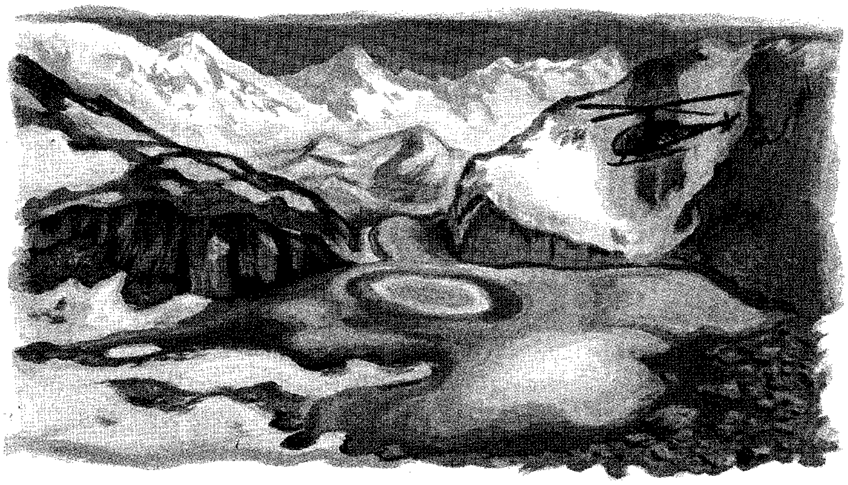
I asked him about his alliance with the B.J.P. "You were always a secular politician," I said. "How did you come to link yourself to a religious party?"

Fernandes spoke of an old political mentor who had urged him to maintain a dialogue with every segment of the political spectrum. He spoke of a bitter feud with a former protégé, Laloo Yadav, a powerful Bihar politician. Then, suddenly, he cut himself off. "Look," he said, "I'm rationalizing."

He had gone to the B.J.P. as a last resort, he explained. He had tried to reach agreements with various secular left-wing parties. He tried many doors, he said, and "only when all other doors were closed" did he go to the B.J.P.

The causes of Fernandes's despondency were suddenly clear. He had spent a lifetime in politics, and the system had spun him around and around until what he did and what he believed no longer had the remotest connection. I knew that he still possessed a certain kind of idealism and personal integrity. But what had prevailed finally was vanity—the sheer vanity of power.

Fernandes is not alone. This sense of deadlock is an essential part of the background of the nuclear tests of May 11th. To the leaders of the B.J.P., hanging on to power by the good will of a tenuous coalition, the tests must have appeared as one means of blasting a way out of a dead end. But if the B.J.P. bears the principal responsibility for the tests, the blame is not theirs alone: it was Indira Gandhi and her Congress Party who set the precedent for using nuclear



For fourteen years, India and Pakistan have been engaged in a high-altitude war, exchanging artillery fire over a piece of land nobody wants.

technology as political spectacle. Since then, many other Indian politicians have battled with the same temptation. Two other recent Prime Ministers, Narasimha Rao and I. K. Gujral, resisted, to their great credit, but they both came very close to succumbing. In the end, it is in the technology itself that the real danger lies. As long as a nuclear establishment exists, it will always tempt a politician desperate to keep a hold on power.

That night in Leh, I thought of something Fernandes had said to me earlier: "Someday we will sink, and this is not anything to do with China or with Pakistan. It is because this country is cursed to put up with a leadership that has chosen to sell it for their own personal aggrandizement." This seemed now like an unconscious self-indictment.

THERE are, in fact, many reasons to fear nuclear catastrophe in South Asia.

Both India and Pakistan have ballistic missiles. Their nuclear warheads will necessarily be produced in only a few facilities, because of limited resources. India's nuclear weapons, for instance, are thought to be produced at a single unit: the Bhabha Atomic Research Center, in Bombay. Both sides are, therefore, realistically able to destroy each other's production capacities with not much more than a single strike.

Several major cities in India and Pakistan are within a few hundred miles of each other, so, once launched, a missile would take approximately five minutes to reach its target. Given the short flight time, military planners on both sides almost certainly have plans to retaliate immediately. In other words, if either nation believed itself to be under attack it would have to respond instantly. In moments of crisis, the intelligence services of both India and Pakistan have historically had unreliable perceptions of threat. They have also been known to produce outright faulty intelligence.

The trouble will probably start in Kashmir. India and Pakistan have already fought two wars over the state. In recent months, the conflict has spilled into other parts of India, with civilian populations coming under attack in the neighboring state of Himachal Pradesh, for example. The Indian government once mooted the idea of launching "hot pursuit" attacks across the border, against insurgents sheltering in Pakistani-held territory. In Pakistan, such assaults are likely to be perceived as an invasion. The risks of escalation are very real.

Zia Mian, a Pakistani-born nuclear expert at Princeton, said to me, "There are soldiers on both sides who have a hankering for a grand act of heroic erasure. A day might well come when these people would say, 'Let's get it over with forever, once and for all, no matter what the cost.'"

ON a hot and humid August day, I drove around New Delhi with an old friend, Kanti Bajpai, trying to picture the damage the city would sustain during a nuclear explosion. Kanti has a doctorate in strategic studies from the University of Illinois, and he was among the many antinuclear activists who, on learning of the tests of May 11th, immediately went to work. At the time, the B.J.P.'s cadres were organizing celebrations in the streets of several Indian cities. Opposition politicians looked on in stunned silence, struggling to gather their wits. It fell to citizens' associations to take on the task of articulating a critical response. Kanti came to national attention at this time.

Kanti believes that India, in pursuing a nuclear program, has gambled away its single greatest military advantage over Pakistan: the overwhelming superiority of its conventional forces. In legitimatizing Pakistan's nuclear program, India's military planners have, in effect, rendered their ground troops redundant. Kanti sees no threat from China. There is no history of persistent antagonism. No Chinese emperor ever invaded India; no Indian ever sought to conquer any part of China. In thousands of years of close coexistence, Chinese and Indian soldiers have fought only once, during the war of 1962.

Along with a number of other academics, Kanti has been trying to assess the consequences of a nuclear war in South Asia. A friend of his, M. V. Ramana, a research fellow at the Center for Energy and Environmental Studies at Princeton University, had recently computed the possible effects of a nuclear attack on Bombay. It was one of the first such studies to be done of a South Asian city. Ramana's findings caused some surprise: the casualty rates that he cited, for instance, were lower than expected—about two hundred thousand. This was because in his calculations Ramana assumed that neither India nor Pakistan would use bombs much greater than what was dropped on Hiroshima—with a yield of about fifteen kilotons.

We set out on our journey through New Delhi armed with a copy of Ramana's seminal paper. Kanti wanted to apply the same calculations to New Delhi.

We drove up Rajpath, the grand thoroughfare that separates North Block from South Block. Ahead lay the domed residence of the President. This was once the palace of the Imperial British Viceroy; it is now known as Rashtrapati Bhavan. The palace looks down Rajpath toward a monument called India Gate. In the distance lie the ramparts of the Purana Qila, a sixteenth-century fort.

Ground zero, Kanti said, will probably lie somewhere near here: in all likelihood, between North and South Blocks.

On detonation, a nuclear weapon releases a burst of high-energy X rays. These cause the temperature in the immediate vicinity to rise very suddenly to tens of millions of degrees. The rise in temperature causes a fireball to form, which shoots outward in every direction, cooling as it expands. By the time it reaches the façades of North Block and South Block, it will probably have cooled to about three hundred thousand degrees—enough to kill every living thing within several hundred feet of the point of explosion. Those caught on open ground will evaporate; those shielded by the buildings' thick walls will be incinerated.

South Block and North Block, like many of the ceremonial buildings in New Delhi, are made principally of pink Rajasthan sandstone. In Hiroshima and Nagasaki, granite surfaces and ceramic tiles up to several hundred feet from the explosion melted. Sandstone is considerably less dense than granite. The façades of the two blocks will probably melt like candle wax; so will the dome and walls of Rashtrapati Bhavan, and possibly even a portion of India Gate.

As the fireball expands, it generates a shock wave called the Mach front, which delivers a massive blow to everything in its path. This, in turn, is followed by an enormous increase in air pressure and very high wind velocities. The pressure of the air in the wake of the Mach front can reach several thousand pounds per square inch: it's like being inside a pressure cooker, but with many thousands of times greater pressure. The shock can generate winds that blow at speeds of more than two thousand miles per hour.

"Human beings will become projectiles," Kanti said. "If you're here and you're not incinerated immediately, you will become a human cannonball."

We drove toward the Jamuna River, passing the enormous circular building that houses India's parliament. Everyone here, Kanti said, will be either incinerated or killed by the radiation.

We proceeded to the National Archives and the vast bureaucratic warrens that house the government's principal administrative offices. These, too, will be destroyed. The recorded basis of government, Kanti said, will vanish. Land records, taxation documents—almost everything needed to reconstruct a settled society—will perish from the blast.

The changes in pressure caused by the explosion, Kanti explained, even a small one, will make your lungs burst. You won't necessarily die of burns or poisoning. "Your internal organs will rupture, even if you survived the initial blasts and flying objects."

Later, I asked Gautam Bhatia, a New Delhi architect, about the effects of the blast on the city's buildings.

Many of the landmark buildings of British-era New Delhi, he wrote me, have very thick walls and are laterally buttressed with cross walls. These are capable of withstanding great pressure. But many of the city's contemporary public buildings, like some of its five-star hotels, have glass curtain walls. "Such structures have a poor rating for withstanding pressure, poor facilities for egress, and virtually no fire-fighting equipment."

New Delhi's newer residences will fare very badly. Most of the buildings are designed to withstand winds of about a hundred and sixty kilometres per hour: in the event of a nuclear explosion, they will face wind speeds of up to twenty times that. "The walls would be blown away instantly; if columns and slabs remain, the pressure will rip the building out of its foundations and overturn it."

In Indian cities, many households use cannisters of liquid petroleum gas for everyday cooking. For about a mile around ground zero, Ramana estimates, these cannisters will explode.

Kanti explained to me that the geographical spread of New Delhi is such that a single fifteen-kiloton nuclear explosion could not destroy the whole area. He estimated that the casualty figures for New Delhi would be much lower than those which Ramana had cited for Bombay: as low, potentially, as sixty thousand. Only the central parts of the city would be directly affected. "The city would continue to function in some way," Kanti said, "but its municipal, medical, and police services would be in total chaos. The infrastructure would disappear."

Fatalities, however, will account for only a small part of the human toll. Several hundreds of thousands of people will suffer burn injuries.

In New Delhi, I met with Dr. Usha Shrivastava, a member of a group called International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. She told me that over the past few decades, while New Delhi's population has more than doubled, the total number of hospital beds in the city has increased only slightly. She estimated that there are only six to seven thousand beds in the government-run hospitals that serve the majority of the city's population. These hospitals are already so crowded that in some wards two or three patients share a single bed.

But the major hospitals—including the only one with a ward that specializes in burn injuries—are all within a few miles of the city's center, and they will not survive the blast anyway.

In the event of a nuclear explosion in New Delhi, Dr. Shrivastava said softly, "the ones who will be alive will be jealous of the dead ones."

When it's over, millions and millions of people will be without homes. They will begin to walk. The roads will soon be too clogged to accommodate cars or buses. Everyone will walk, rich and poor, young and old. Many will be nursing burn wounds and other severe injuries. They will be sick from radiation. There will be no food, no clean water, and no prospect of medical care. The water from the mountains will be contaminated. The rivers will be ruined. Epidemics will break out. Hundreds of thousands will die.

I had always imagined that a nuclear blast was a kind of apocalypse, beyond which no existence could be contemplated. Like many Indians, I associated the image of *pralay*—the mythological chaos of the end of the world—with a nuclear explosion. Listening to Kanti that day as we drove around New Delhi, I realized that I, like most people, had been seduced into a species of nuclear romanticism, into thinking of nuclear weapons in symbolic and mythic ways. The explosion that Kanti was describing would not constitute an apocalyptic ending: it would be a beginning. What would follow would make the prospect of an end an object of universal envy.

My journey would not be complete without a trip to Pakistan. It was to be my first visit, and the circumstances looked far from propitious. The week before, the United States had fired Tomahawk missiles at terrorist camps in southern Afghanistan. Some had landed near the border of Pakistan. There were reports of Indian and American flags being burned in the streets.

At the airport in Lahore, I steeled myself for a long wait. My Indian passport would lead, I was sure, to delays, questions, perhaps an interrogation. But nothing happened: I was waved through with a smile.

When Indians and Pakistanis visit each other's countries, there is often an alchemical reaction, a kind of magic. I had heard accounts of this from friends: they had spoken of the warmth, the hospitality, the intensity of emotion, the sense of stepping back into an interrupted memory, as though an earlier conversation were being resumed. Almost instantly these tales were confirmed—in taxi-drivers' smiles, in the stories that people sought me out to tell, in the endless invitations to meals.

At mealtimes, though, there were arguments about how long it would be before Taliban-like groups made a bid for power. After dessert, the talk would turn to the buying of Kalashnikovs.

I went to see Qazi Hussain Ahmed, the leader of the Jamaat-e-Islami, the country's principal religious party. The Jamaat's headquarters are on the outskirts of Lahore, in a large and self-sufficient compound, surrounded by a high wall and manned by sentries.

Ahmed has a well-trimmed white beard, twinkling eyes, and a manner of great affability. "Other than the Army," he said, "all the institutions in this country are more or less finished. These are all institutions of a Westernized élite, of people who are corrupt. We are now paying the price of their corruption. All the problems we have now—the economic crisis and so on—are the fruit of their corruption."

I was hearing a strange echo of voices from India.

"We are not for nuclear weapons," Ahmed told me. "We are ourselves in favor of disarmament. But we don't accept that five nations should have nuclear weapons and others shouldn't. We say, 'Let the five also disarm.' "

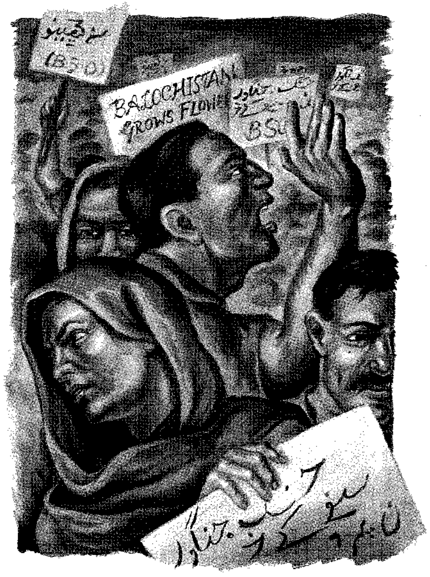
On one issue, however, his views were very different: the probability of a nuclear war. "When you have two nations," he said, "between whom there is so much ill will, so much enmity, and they both have nuclear weapons, then there is always the danger that these weapons will be used if war breaks out. Certainly. And in war people become mad. And when a nation fears that it is about to be defeated, it will do anything to spare itself the shame."

Almost without exception, the people I spoke to in Pakistan—hawks and doves alike—were of the opinion that the probability of nuclear war was high.

I spent my last afternoon in Lahore with Pakistan's leading human-rights lawyer, Asma Jahangir. Asma is forty-eight, the daughter of an opposition politician who was one of the most vocal critics of the Pakistani Army's operations in what is now Bangladesh. She spent her teen-age years briefing lawyers on behalf of her frequently imprisoned father. Today, she cannot go outside without an armed bodyguard.

"Is nuclear war possible?" I asked.

"Anything is possible," she said, "because our policies are irrational. Our decision-making is ad hoc. We are surrounded by disinformation. We have a historical enmity and the emotionalism of jihad against each other. And we are fatalistic nations who believe that whatever happens—a famine, a drought, an accident—it is the will of God. Our decision-making is done by a few people on both sides. It's not the ordinary woman living in a village in Bihar whose voice is going to be heard, who's going to say, 'For God's sake, I don't want a nuclear bomb—I want my cow and I want milk for my children.' "



"We are fatalistic nations who believe that whatever happens—a famine, a drought, an accident—it's the will of God."

I OFTEN think back to the morning of May 12th. I was in New York at the time. I remember my astonishment both at the news of the tests and also at the response to them: the tone of chastisement, the finger-wagging by countries that still possessed tens of thousands of nuclear warheads. Had they imagined that the technology to make a bomb had wound its way back into a genie's lamp because the Cold War had ended? Did they think that it had escaped the world's attention that the five peacekeepers of the United Nations Security Council all had nuclear arms? If so, then perhaps India's nuclear tests served a worthwhile purpose by waking the world from this willed slumber.

So strong was my response to the West's hypocrisy that I discovered an unusual willingness in myself to put my own beliefs on nuclear matters aside. If there were good arguments to be made in defense of the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests, then I wanted to know what they were: I wanted to hear them for myself.

I didn't hear them. What I heard instead was a strange mix of psychologizing, grandiose fantasy, and cynicism. The motivation behind India's nuclear program is summed up neatly in this formula: it is status-driven, not threat-driven. The intention is to push India into an imagined circle of twice-born nations—"the great powers." In Pakistan, the motivation is similar. Status, here, means parity with India. That the leaders of these two countries should be willing to risk economic breakdown, nuclear accidents, and nuclear war in order to indulge these confused ambitions is itself a sign that some essential element in the social compact has broken down: the desires of the rulers and the well-being of the ruled could not be further apart.

I think of something that George Fernandes said to me: "Our country has already fallen to the bottom. Very soon we will reach a point where there is no hope at all. I believe that we have reached that point now." I think also of the words of I. A. Rehman, of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan: "This is the worst it's ever been. Everything is discredited. Everything is lost, broken into pieces."

I have never had so many utterly depressing conversations, so many talks that ended with the phrase "we have hit rock bottom." There was the college student who said, "Now even Bill Gates will take us seriously." There was the research scientist who believed that, now, his papers would get more international attention. And there were the diplomats looking forward to a seat on the Security Council. Has the gap between the realities of the subcontinent and the aspirations of its middle classes ever been wider? Talking to nuclear enthusiasts, I had the sense that what they were really saying was: "The country has tried everything else to get ahead. Nothing worked. This is our last card and this is the time to play it." I am convinced that support for India's nuclear program is occasioned by a fear of the future. The bomb has become the weapon with which the rulers of the subcontinent wish to avert whatever is ahead.

The pursuit of nuclear weapons in the subcontinent is the moral equivalent of civil war: the targets the rulers have in mind are, in the end, their own people. ♦

DEPT. OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS

THE NEW WORLD DISORDER

Facing the threat of an international economic crash, policymakers are searching for a new John Maynard Keynes to put things right. They should revisit the old one.

BY JOHN CASSIDY

THE Mount Washington Hotel, in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, looks much the same today as it did in late June, 1944, when seven hundred and thirty delegates from forty-four countries arrived there, at the invitation of President Roosevelt, to discuss the postwar international financial system. A majestic white, turreted building, constructed at the turn of the century in the Spanish Renaissance style, it sits in the White Mountain National Forest, two hours' drive north of Manchester. The hotel's seclusion and the natural beauty of its environs were not the only reasons it was picked for the conference. John Maynard Keynes, the Cambridge University economist and Bloomsbury aesthete, who was heading the British delegation, had a serious heart condition, and the cool New Hampshire air was to his liking. Furthermore, in contrast to other retreats of the rich and famous, the Mount Washington Hotel had an open booking policy, and this insured that there would be no embarrassment for the Jews who were leading the host delegation: Henry Morgenthau, the Treasury Secretary, and Harry Dexter White, the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for international affairs.

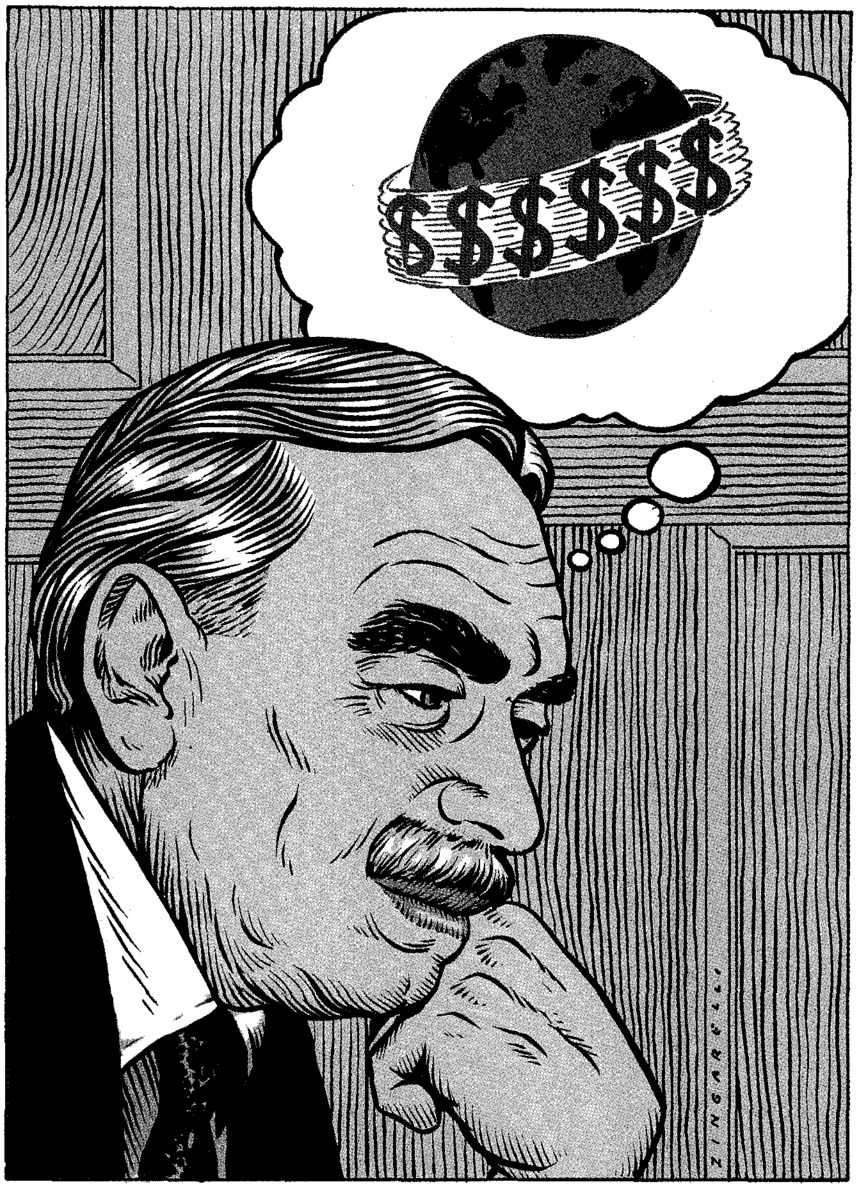
In 1944, as now, there was general agreement among policymakers and economists that something had gone badly wrong with the international financial system. The delegates arrived in New Hampshire hoping to prevent a repetition of the disastrous period between the First and Second World Wars when country after country devalued its currency and erected trade barriers in a futile effort to escape from the Great Depression. Those policies had been intended to divert demand toward domestically produced goods by making them cheap relative to foreign goods and by restricting imports. But when a number of nations adopted those tactics the volume of international trade had collapsed, the global slump had deepened, and the financial system had all but ceased to function.

The plan to be discussed at Bretton Woods had been put together during two years of negotiations between Keynes and White, a fifty-one-year-old Harvard-trained specialist in international finance. Keynes had shot to renown a quarter of a century earlier, with his book entitled "The Economic Consequences of the Peace," which was a devastating indictment of the Treaty of Versailles. He subsequently married a famous Russian ballerina, Lydia Lopokova (thereby outraging his retinue of former male lovers); lambasted Winston Churchill for returning the United Kingdom to the gold standard; wrote the century's most influential economics treatise ("The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Prices"); made a fortune on the stock exchange; and entered the House of Lords. At the age of sixty-one, he was universally acknowledged to be a remarkable figure, if a little opinionated.

Keynes and White proposed fixing exchange rates at agreed levels, removing barriers to foreign trade, and permitting tight controls on the movement of investment capital, thereby insuring a stable environment in which the international economy could flourish. The system would be overseen by a Stabilization Fund (it later became the International Monetary Fund), which would lend money to countries that ran into temporary financial difficulties, discipline countries that adopted irresponsible policies, and alter the exchange rates of countries that suffered a permanent economic dislocation through no fault of their own. In addition, an International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (which became known as the World Bank) would help rebuild war-shattered economies and fund investment in developing countries.

The American government overruled Keynes on a number of points, and he didn't agree with every detail of the final plan. Still, he believed that the new system would be a great improvement over the chaos of the thirties and the gold standard of the twenties. (Under the gold standard, countries had fixed the value of their currencies in gold, and the amount of money in circulation had been limited by their gold holdings.) In many ways, the Bretton Woods plan represented an international counterpart of the domestic agenda that Keynes had proposed in his 1936 book, "The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money," which served to legitimatize the New Deal by advocating increased government spending to lift countries out of a depression. Both plans were based on a rejection of the old laissez-faire notion that if economies were left to their own devices they would automatically return to full employment, and asserted that capitalism, if it were to survive and prosper, would need to be actively stabilized. Nonetheless, Keynes was initially skeptical about the proposed meeting at Bretton Woods, which he referred to, before arriving in New Hampshire, as "the most monstrous monkey house assembled for many years." The majority of the invitees "will merely encumber the ground," he wrote to a British colleague. "It would seem probable that acute alcoholic poisoning would set in before the end."

When the conference opened, on July 1, 1944, that concern proved unfounded. A lot of drinking was indeed done—"The flow of alcohol is appalling," Keynes reported to London—but so was a lot of hard work, with, in Keynes's words, "committees or commissions, numbering anything up to 200 persons in rooms with bad acoustics, shouting through microphones, many of those present, often including the Chairman, with an imperfect knowledge of English, each wanting to get something on the record which would look well in the Press down at home.” Keynes was accompanied by his wife, Lydia, who annoyed her neighbors by practicing her dance steps at all hours. Photographs from the conference show Keynes’s face pinched and withdrawn but his eyes as alert as ever. At one point, he suffered a minor heart attack, but he soldiered on, in his inimitable style. “He knows this thing inside out so that when anybody says Section 15-C he knows what that is. Nobody else in the room knows,” Dean Acheson, the future Secretary of State, who was part of the American delegation, said. “So before you have an opportunity to turn to Section 15-C and see what he is talking about, he says, ‘I hear no objection to that,’ and it is passed.”



Keynes insisted that the problems of capitalism—boom-and-bust cycles, trade wars, poverty—could be resolved through the application of higher intellects (like his).

MARK ZINGARELLI

Despite the confusion, the meetings went well. Keynes even communicated effectively with Morgenthau, the American Treasury Secretary, who in the past had often been put off by his haughty manner. “There is no stickiness at all and we can chat together like cronies by the hour,” Keynes noted. On July 22nd, when most of the outstanding issues had been resolved, Keynes moved acceptance of the conference’s Final Act, and as he left the room the delegates chanted “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow.” Lionel Robbins, another British delegate, jotted in his diary, “This is one of the greatest triumphs of his life. Scrupulously obedient to his instructions, battling against fatigue and weakness, he has throughout dominated the Conference.” The same day, Keynes wrote to London, “All of us here have the greatest sense of elation. All in all, quite extraordinary harmony has prevailed. As an experiment in international co-operation, the conference has been an outstanding success.”

As an experiment in economic policy, the Bretton Woods agreement proved equally impressive. Between 1945 and 1973, when the regime of financial controls and fixed exchange rates remained in effect, the war-ravaged economies of Europe and Asia were rebuilt, and the developed world as a whole enjoyed annual economic growth rates exceeding four per cent, which translated into a virtual tripling of its total output. During the late nineteen-sixties and early nineteen-seventies, however, the framework came under increasing pressure as the United States, the anchor country in the system, printed more and more dollars to pay for the Vietnam War. Other countries began to fear a devaluation of the dollar. At the same time, international banks and investors began to exploit new technologies, such as electronic-transfer systems and offshore financial markets, which made it easier to shuffle money around the globe. In 1973, the Nixon Administration, facing a speculative attack on the dollar, allowed the United States currency to float, and the Bretton Woods system collapsed.

It was replaced by the current system (or nonsystem), in which most major exchange rates are determined by the market, and money is allowed, in large part, to flow around the world unencumbered by governmental controls. Traders at dealing desks in Tokyo and Frankfurt can buy Polish stocks, Lebanese bonds, or Venezuelan currency futures, with the money being transferred in and out of the relevant currencies at the flick of a computer switch. During the nearly three decades since the demise of the Bretton Woods arrangements, the annual rate of economic growth in developed countries has fallen by a third, and the incidence of international financial crises has increased sharply—to the point where even countries that follow sound economic policies are often stricken along with the profligate. According to figures cited by the World Bank, no fewer than sixty-nine countries have endured serious banking crises since the late nineteen-seventies, and eighty-seven nations have seen runs on their currency since 1975. Correlation does not prove causation, but the evidence suggests that the global shift toward financial liberalization, which was strongly promoted by successive American governments, has made the world economy a great deal more volatile and has done little, if anything, to raise long-term growth rates.

The most dramatic example of this increased volatility is the current financial epizootic, which in the course of the past year has struck East Asia, Russia, and threatened Latin America, shattering the so-called Asian economic miracle and leaving tens of millions of people unemployed. The crisis began in July of last year, when Thailand was forced to devalue its currency, the baht. By the end of 1997, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and South Korea had all watched their currencies and stock markets collapse, leaving behind a vast swath of insolvent banks and failed businesses. The international crisis deepened when, earlier this year, the Japanese economy, the second largest in the world, entered a severe recession. Then, in August, Russia essentially went bankrupt, devaluing the ruble and defaulting on some of its loans. Ever since, the world's financial markets have been convulsed with fears that Brazil, Venezuela, and Mexico could be the next countries to fall victim.

Until a couple of months ago, the United States was fairly well insulated from the economic carnage elsewhere, but that is no longer true. The recent downturn in the stock market, the Federal Reserve's decision to cut short-term interest rates, and the near-collapse of Long-Term Capital Management, a large investment fund, were all prompted by the global crisis. The impact of these developments was predictable. Economic statesmanship, like the stock market, runs in cycles. When things are going well, there isn't much demand for it. Let the Dow take a precipitate dive, however, or let the world economy flirt with recession, and the cries for a new Keynes go up all around. Appearing before the Council on Foreign Relations last month, President Clinton said, "This is the biggest financial challenge facing the world in half a century," and he asked finance ministers and central bankers to find ways to "adapt the international financial architecture to the twenty-first century." A week later, Britain's Tony Blair echoed his mentor's sentiments, calling on world leaders to "build a new Bretton Woods for the next millennium." In the first week of October, central bankers and finance ministers from the world's leading countries gathered in Washington at the President's invitation, but the meeting turned into something of a fiasco. The Europeans criticized the Americans for failing to come up with enough money for the I.M.F.; the Americans criticized the Japanese for failing to expand their economy; and the Japanese complained that no one understood their predicament. No major initiatives were introduced, and the global financial markets voiced their disapproval of the policy vacuum with yet another wave of selling.

ASEXUAL HARASSMENT
Why don't you call your mother more often? You know she loves you.
You're aware, of course, that every time you serve red meat, you increase your husband's chances of having a heart attack.
If you weren't working, you'd have perfect children, like Mrs. What's-Her-Name.

Clearly, the world needs an economic statesman who is willing to discard the old shibboleths and consider fresh ideas, but there doesn't appear to be such a figure on the horizon. Fortunately, there is Keynes. The basic quandary facing today's policymakers is strikingly similar to the one that he and Harry White tussled with at Bretton Woods: In an increasingly interconnected world, what is the best way to insure economic growth? Furthermore, many of the ideas that have been floated for reforming the international system (such as controlling the flow of investment capital, changing the role of the I.M.F., or setting up a global central bank) echo suggestions made by Keynes during the discussions leading up to Bretton Woods. These proposals were rejected by the American government and have remained largely forgotten, even by professional economists, for half a century.

JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES was born on June 5, 1883, in Cambridge. His father, John Neville Keynes, was himself an eminent Cambridge economist, but the son did not immediately follow in his father's footsteps. After Eton, he entered the mathematics tripos at King's College, Cambridge, finishing twelfth in his year and spending much of his time on intellectual and homoerotic pursuits at the Apostles Society, an élitist university club whose members included Bertrand Russell, Rupert Brooke, Lytton Strachey, Leonard Woolf, and G. E. Moore. Keynes turned to economics as a postgraduate, but then spent almost two years as a civil servant in the India Office before returning to King's, where he became a fellow. During the First World War, he was seconded to the Treasury as a government adviser, and it was there that he first came to public attention. For the rest of his life, he shuttled between his rooms in Cambridge, a farmhouse in Sussex, and a London town house in Gordon Square, Bloomsbury. He published a long stream of articles and books—his collected works cover thirty volumes—but also found time to act as a company chairman, magazine publisher, patron of the arts, journalist, investor, and (from 1925 on) devoted and faithful husband.

Viewed from today's perspective, Keynes was the original "Third Way" thinker. Like the intellectuals surrounding Bill Clinton and Tony Blair, he wanted to combine the freedom and dynamism of a capitalist democracy with economic security for the masses and a degree of social justice. Many intellectuals at the time believed that ambition to be a pipe dream, but Keynes, unlike so many of his peers, was never susceptible to totalitarian ideologies of the left or the right. "It is fatal for a capitalist government to have principles," he wrote in the mid-nineteen-twenties. "It must be opportunistic in the best sense of the word, living by accommodation and good sense."

Keynes believed that the problems of capitalism—boom-and-bust cycles, trade wars, poverty, inequality—were technical and could be solved through the application of higher intellects, like his own. His greatest book, "The General Theory," was a long and unwieldy attempt to explain how economies can get stuck in a depression, something that classical economics had been unable to explain, and how an increase in government spending can be used to pull such an economy out of the slump. Economists are still debating whether Keynes fully achieved his theoretical objective, but in practical terms he emerged triumphant. Ever since the publication of "The General Theory," governments have turned to "Keynesian" policies to guide the course of their economies. Much of the terminology he devised in the book is still used. It is generally agreed, for example, that the Japanese economy is now stuck in a "liquidity trap"—a situation in which consumers and businesses are so depressed that no amount of monetary expansion by the central bank can persuade them to start spending. (In a sign of increasing desperation, the Tokyo government is considering handing out gift vouchers worth about two hundred and fifty dollars to each of Japan's hundred and twenty-five million inhabitants.)

Keynes believed that the principal driving force behind the business cycle is investment. He was always careful in his analysis to separate productive investment—the expenditure of money on plant and equipment—from mere financial speculation. "Speculators may do no harm as bubbles on a steady stream of enterprise," he wrote in "The General Theory." "But the position is serious when enterprise becomes the bubble on a whirlpool of speculation." A few years later, when he turned his attention to international economics, he made the same distinction. "The advocacy of a control of capital movements must not be taken to mean that the era of international investment should be brought to an end," he wrote in August of 1942. "On the contrary, the system contemplated should greatly facilitate the restoration of international credit for loan purposes. . . . The object, and it is a vital object, is to have a means of distinguishing a) Between movements of floating funds and genuine new investment for developing the world's resources; and b) Between movements, which will help to maintain equilibrium, from surplus countries to deficiency countries, and speculative movements or flights out of deficiency countries or from one surplus country to another."

Keynes was convinced that the movement of "hot money," as it is now called, had been immensely damaging during the period between the two wars. Speculative capital, instead of flowing from North America to Europe, which needed help in rebuilding itself, had flowed in the opposite direction, much of it ending up in the United States, which was running a large trade surplus. This became, in the end, the major cause of instability, Keynes claimed in a September, 1941, paper, which first outlined his proposals for the postwar era. "Nothing is more certain than that the movement of capital funds must be regulated," he wrote. If this didn't happen, "the whereabouts of 'the better 'ole' "—the best place to stash one's money—would "shift with the speed of the magic carpet and these movements would have the effect of disorganizing all steady business."

This fifty-seven-year-old passage is, of course, a pretty good description of what has been happening in Asia for the past eighteen months. In 1996, when the region was prospering mightily, five countries (South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand) received about ninety billion dollars from foreign lenders and investors. This money wasn't really needed by these countries, which already had high savings rates and plentiful sources of capital, and a great deal of the foreign capital was misused. Instead of financing automobile plants or semiconductor factories, much of it was extended to wheeler-dealers in the form of short-term bank loans or was used to buy stocks and bonds. The situation was inherently unstable, and early last year, when the first signs of problems emerged in Asia, the foreign bankers and investors tried to pull out their money en masse, sparking a wholesale panic. Countries that a few months earlier had been able to borrow as much as they wanted suddenly couldn't get any new bank credit at all; indeed, about twelve billion dollars in private capital left the region in 1997. As the hot money poured out, the Asian currencies and stock markets collapsed, causing collateral damage that is still spreading. South Korea and Thailand, two countries previously known as Asian Tigers, will see their economies contract by between five and ten per cent in 1998. Indonesia, another former big cat, is in even worse shape: its economy is set to shrink by nearly a fifth, and food is running short. Already, there are about eighty million Indonesians living in poverty.

When Hitler invaded Poland, Keynes was fifty-six, and he didn't see himself playing a large part in the war effort. He planned to increase his teaching load and free up some of his Cambridge colleagues for government service. In the first months of the conflict, his role was limited to a memorandum or two on requisitioning policy and occasional meetings with a group of aging administrators from the First World War, whom he referred to as the Old Dogs. Gradually, though, he found himself being sucked into official circles, largely at the behest of others. In February, 1940, he published an influential pamphlet entitled "How to Pay for the War," and in August of that year he took an office in Whitehall, from which he started dabbling in all elements of economic policy.

A few months later, Harold Nicolson, of the Ministry of Information, asked Keynes to draft a propaganda response to a German proposal from Walther Funk, the president of the Reichsbank, calling for a "New Order" in Europe, based on free trade, fixed exchange rates, and strict capital controls. Keynes eventually complied, but he also wrote privately to Nicolson, saying, "If Funk's plan is taken at face value, it is excellent and just what we ourselves ought to be thinking of doing." This exercise got

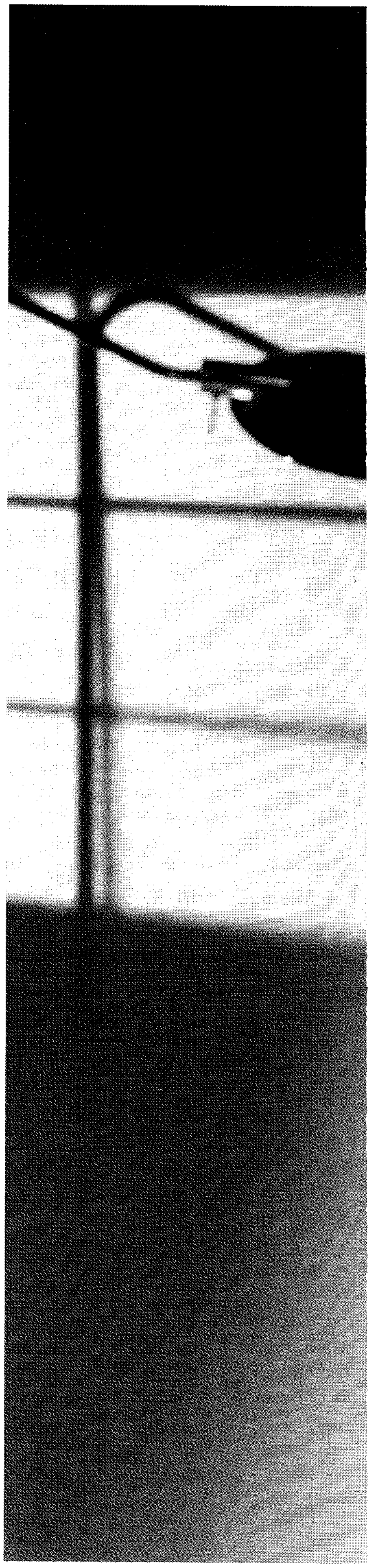
FORECAST

ALL IN THE FAMILY

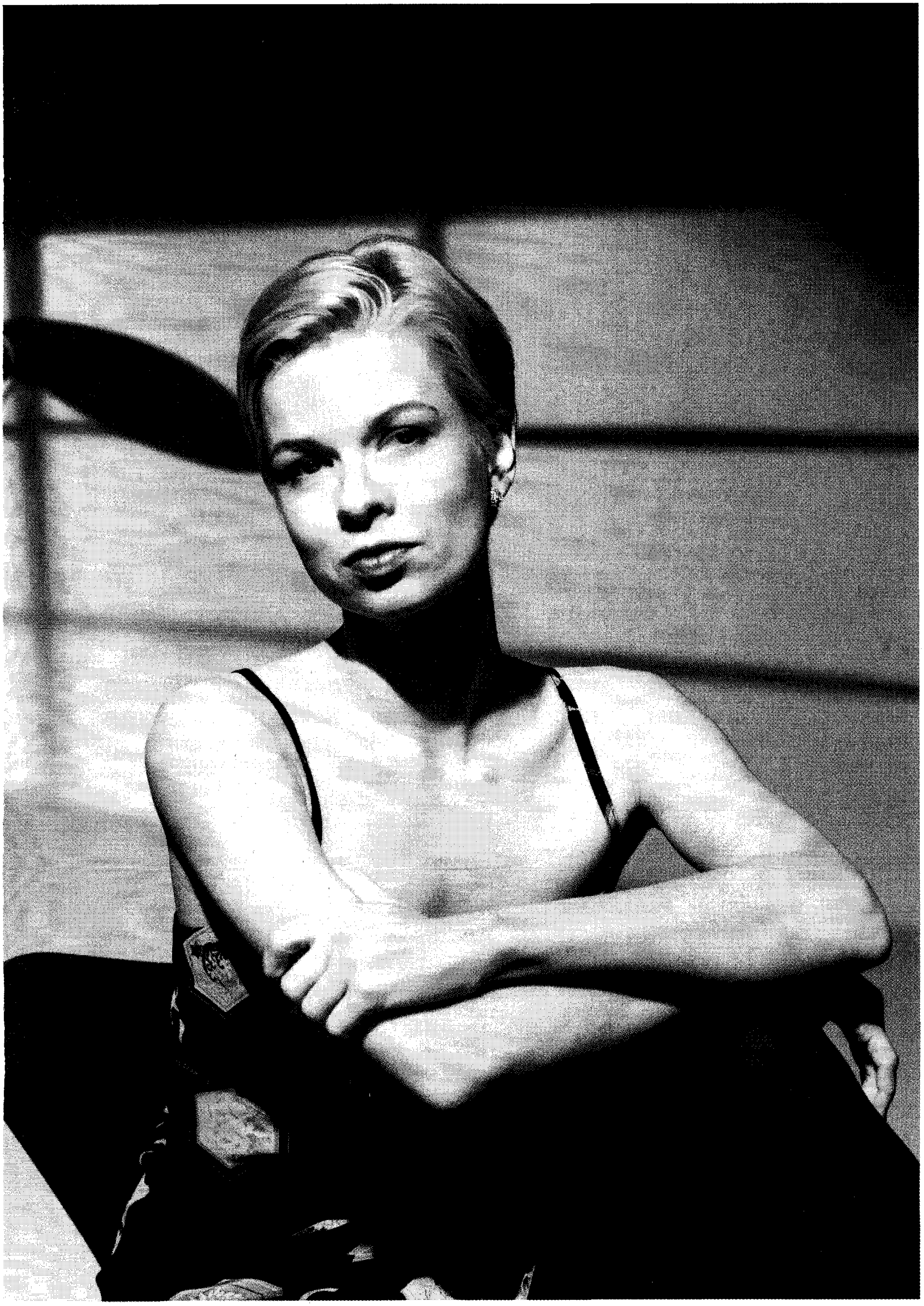
In his 1987 autobiography, "The Magic Lantern," the director Ingmar Bergman spends a great deal of time trying to converse with the ultimate patriarch. "I have struggled all my life with a tormented and joyless relationship with God," he writes. "God spoke, God said nothing." But this stern son of a Lutheran minister tells us almost nothing about his relationship with the fleshy-lipped, luminescent Swedish actress Liv Ullmann, who was one of his most unforgettable stars (and one of the few certifiable sex symbols to come out of Stockholm's fabled Svensk Filmindustri since Garbo).

Bergman also fails to mention Linn Ullmann, the daughter he had with Liv in 1966. Liv Ullmann is only slightly more forthcoming. In her memoir, "Changing," she includes an epilogue that functions as an apologia of sorts. In the most intimate of tones—the same tone that made her performances in "Persona" and "Cries and Whispers" hallmarks of screen acting—Ullmann takes herself to task for being a "hectic and stressed" single mother who gave short shrift to her only child.

Linn Ullmann, now thirty-two, is also a single mother, who worries about the amount of time she spends with her own eight-year-old son. But, unlike many children of celebrities, Ullmann has a healthy sense of herself and her inheritance—which includes a love of self-expression (without the self-indulgence and confessional bent that usually go with it). She has worked as a literary critic at the Oslo-based newspaper *Dagbladet* since 1993, and she just published her first novel to critical and commercial acclaim. "Before You Sleep," which comes out here in a year and a half, is a portrait not of her emotionally naked parents but of a young woman named Karin, who, Ullmann says, "is not exactly a Bridget Jones type. She doesn't wait for men to call." Hard-nosed and a little hardboiled, Karin captivates largely because of Ullmann's imagination, which is informed by a love of the intricacies of family life, of the ties that bind. —Hilton Als



PHOTOGRAPH BY DUDLEY REED



"Dad, remember how you bungled the Lorton account?"

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him reflecting on postwar economic arrangements, and his reflections grew more focussed when he visited Washington in the summer of 1941 to discuss Lend-Lease, the aid program that provided Britain with American armaments and money in return for a "consideration" at an undetermined later date. After going back to England, Keynes set down his thoughts in a paper entitled "Proposals for an International Currency Union."

The centerpiece of Keynes's vision was the International Clearing Union, a prototype global central bank, which would "generalize the essential principle of banking, as it is exhibited within any closed system." The new institution would have its own currency, called the bancor, and it would use this currency to keep the world economy expanding in much the same way that the Federal Reserve manipulates the supply of dollars to try and prevent recessions in the United States. The new authority would also act as the lender of last resort to governments that ran into difficulty. Debtor countries would be entitled to borrow large amounts of money (up to half the average value of their total trade over the previous five years) from the bank, and this arrangement would, Keynes believed, prevent the deflationary spirals that had marred the interwar period.

This ambitious proposal was immediately vetoed by the American Treasury Department. The Roosevelt Administration feared that the United States, which would be the largest financial contributor to the new bank, would have unlimited liability, and it also believed, probably correctly, that Keynes's idea would be a non-starter in Congress. After two and a half years of Anglo-American negotiations, the plan that finally emerged at Bretton Woods was considerably more modest and relied heavily on a set of proposals put forward by Harry White. The new international bank (the Stabilization Fund) would not have its own currency, its budget would be capped, and the amount of money that debtor countries could borrow would be relatively small. Keynes, who was always a political realist, eventually came around to supporting this plan, but his initial reaction had been negative. "It makes no attempt to use the banking principle . . . and is in fact not much more than a version of the gold standard, which simply aims at multiplying the effective volume of the gold base," he complained.

Although the notion of a global Fed never came to anything, it has been resurrected at regular intervals. In 1960, Robert Triffin, a Yale professor, suggested the formation of a new I.M.F. currency, and this idea came to partial fruition seven years later with the creation of Special Drawing Rights for I.M.F. members. In the nineteen-eighties, Richard Cooper, a Harvard professor, published an essay entitled "A Monetary System for the Future," which made the case for a global central bank, and popular interest in the subject has been rekindled by recent events. A few weeks ago Jeffrey E. Garten, a former Under-Secretary of Commerce who is now the dean of the Yale School of Management, published an Op-Ed piece in the *Times* saying the same thing. The world needs an institution with its "hand on the economic rudder when the seas become stormy. It needs a global central bank," Garten wrote.

Politically, this idea may be difficult, but economically it makes even more sense than it did when Keynes suggested it. If the Asian contagion has shown anything, it is the need for an international institution that can extend credit to developing countries when private investors are threatening to stampede for the exits. The I.M.F., by contrast, usually arrives in a country when the stock market and the currency have already collapsed and the economy is in deep trouble. One of the invaluable lessons Keynes taught is that it is a lot easier for makers of policy to prevent an economy from falling into a deep recession than it is for them to get an economy out of a slump.

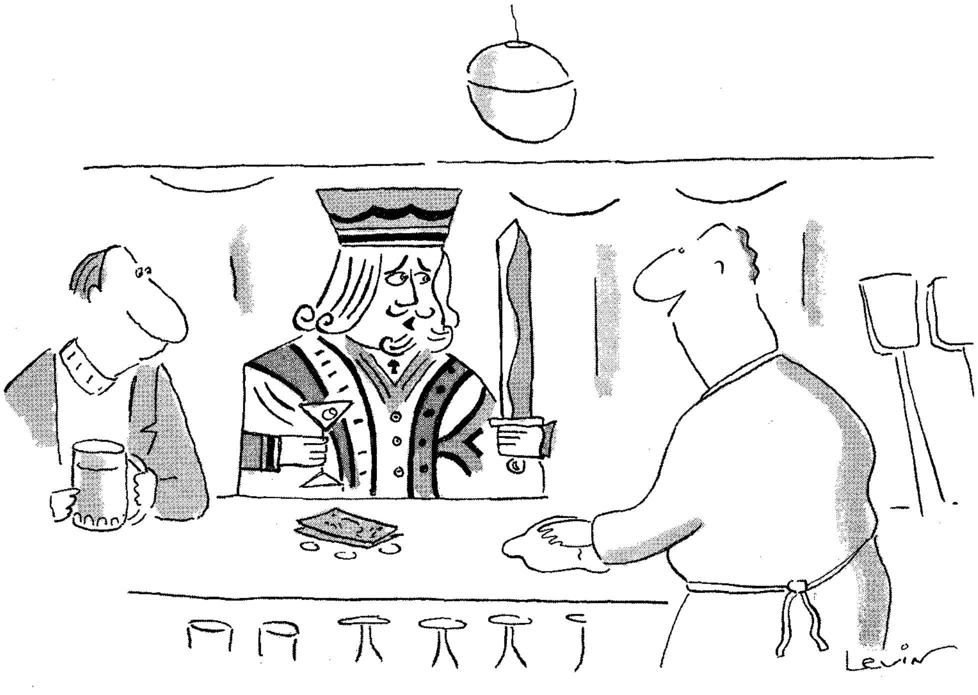
THE I.M.F., it is now generally agreed, has not proved to be up to the task of forestalling or managing international financial crises. That is hardly surprising, since the institution, which is based a few blocks up Pennsylvania Avenue from the White House, was not designed to play its current role. The delegates at Bretton Woods envisaged a modestly capitalized international bank that would manage a system of exchange rates in a world where currencies were easily convertible but capital flows were kept under control. Today, the Fund is the uneasy custodian of a chaotic global system of which some currencies float, others are fixed, and about a trillion dollars, most of it purely speculative, flows through the currency markets every day.

The last twenty-five years have demonstrated that in a world of unrestricted capital movement no exchange-rate regime—fixed or floating—can survive unscathed for long. After 1973, the United States adopted a hands-off policy toward the dollar, but it was forced to reverse course in the mid-nineteen-eighties when the currency soared so high—at one point reaching almost one pound sterling per dollar—that American exporters were priced out of markets all over the world. The world's leading central banks, in coöperation with the Treasury Department, started to sell dollars, and since then the United States currency has gyrated wildly in both directions, moving well beyond any levels that can be justified on grounds of trade in goods and services. Many economists now believe that the only way to guarantee stable prices across countries is to introduce a currency union overseen by an international central bank. (This is what the European Union is now doing.)

A number of developing countries, including Indonesia, South Korea, and Thailand, attempted to keep their exchange rates fixed by linking them to the dollar. This seemed like a good idea at the time, but when the value of the dollar rose sharply, between 1995 and 1997, the Asian currencies appreciated with it, and this made Asian goods more expensive on world markets. Countries in the region started to run ever-larger trade deficits as their imports outstripped their exports. If Keynes's International Clearing Union had been in existence, the Asian countries could have borrowed money from it to finance their trade deficits and, at the same time, could have devalued their currencies modestly in order to restore their international competitiveness. Instead, they kept their exchange rates fixed, and relied on inflows of private capital to pay for the gap between their imports and their exports. Last year, when the deluge of foreign money suddenly dried up, the Asian governments quickly ran out of foreign-currency reserves. They were forced to abandon their fixed exchange rates and to turn to the I.M.F. for multibillion-dollar loan packages. In return for this money, the I.M.F. forced the Asian nations to increase interest rates, cut government spending, close down insolvent banks, sell off publicly owned enterprises, and generally do everything they could to reduce their government's interference in their economies.

A growing number of observers believe that the I.M.F. has actually made the current crisis worse. Some, such as Milton Friedman, the Nobel laureate economist, and George Shultz, the former Secretary of State, argue that the I.M.F. should be abolished, because its mere existence encourages international investors to take risks they otherwise wouldn't take. Others, such as Harvard's Jeffrey Sachs, claim that the *nature* of the I.M.F.'s bailouts is what is at fault. By forcing nations like Russia, Thailand, and Indonesia, which were already in financial trouble, to introduce additional austerity policies, the Fund poured oil on the fire, Sachs argues. He isn't the only prominent economist to call for a change in policy. Joseph Stiglitz, the chief economist at the World Bank, and Paul Krugman, of M.I.T., are both echoing Keynes by advocating direct measures to restrict the movement of speculative capital. "There are big risks attached to short-term capital flows, and the benefits are ambiguous," Stiglitz told me from his office in Washington. Since sudden changes in the direction of capital flows can easily precipitate a recession, governments may be justified in taxing them the same way they tax factories that cause pollution, Stiglitz said. Even the I.M.F., which for the past twenty-five years has been a strong supporter of financial liberalization, has indicated a possible shift back toward the attitude of its founders. In a recently published study of the Asian crisis, the Fund admitted that in many countries "the combination of a weak banking system and an open capital account is 'an accident waiting to happen.'" Given the limits on the pace at which the financial system can be reformed, the study continued, policymakers in emerging markets "may need to consider imposing temporary measures to restrain certain types of inflows."

These developments are encouraging, but an official return to true international Keynesianism remains highly unlikely, despite the President's call for radical thinking. The American government, and the Treasury Department in particular, remains committed to the idea that unrestricted capital flows are a good thing, and this commitment occasionally leads to absurdities. At one point earlier this month, President Clinton called for a policy that enabled "capital to flow freely without the crushing burdens the boom-bust cycle brings." Since it is precisely the free flow of capital that causes the boom-bust cycle, it was, perhaps, not surprising that the



"There was a major reshuffle. Now I'm out on my ear."

President had some difficulty translating his aims into practical policy proposals.

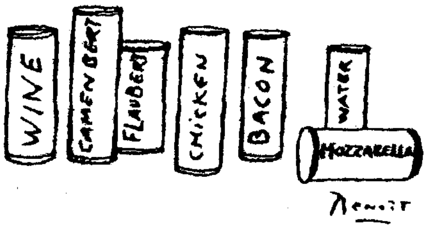
IN many ways, Keynes was an unlikely critic of international capitalism. Throughout his adult life, he speculated in financial markets on both sides of the Atlantic, often deciding where to invest as he lay in bed reading the morning newspaper. In 1921, he became the chairman of the National Mutual Life Assurance Company, and he encouraged the firm to follow what he termed an "active" investment policy. Some of his Bloomsbury associates, such as Lytton Strachey, Virginia Woolf, and Duncan Grant, may have turned up their noses at such bourgeois pursuits, but they were happy to enjoy their fruits. Keynes's investments made him a wealthy man, enriched King's College, where he acted as bursar, and allowed him to maintain the properties in London and Sussex, where he could entertain his friends.

Like many speculators, Keynes used borrowed money for his investments, and this left him vulnerable to margin calls when the markets turned against him. He was virtually wiped out in 1929—not on Wall Street, since he owned no American stocks, but in the commodities markets, where he was long on rubber, corn, cotton, and tin. According to his biographer Robert Skidelsky, Keynes's losses in the commodities markets forced him to liquidate many of his British stocks in a falling market, and by the end of 1929 his net worth had dropped from £44,000 (almost two million dollars in today's money) to just £7,815. He rebuilt his wealth over the next few years, and ended his life, in 1946, with a fortune equivalent to almost fifteen million dollars today.

Keynes's firsthand knowledge of the financial markets permeated his subsequent theoretical work. The recent tribulations in the stock market, which were sparked by the Russian default, would not have surprised him in the least. Unlike many later economists, he was under no illusion that financial markets were rational and "efficient," with prices always reflecting underlying values. He compared stock-market investing to the newspaper beauty contests of his day, where the best way to pick a winner wasn't to decide which girl was intrinsically the prettiest but to discern which candidate the average reader would choose. In keeping with this logic, investors tended to follow one another's moves, rather like a herd of sheep; consequently, stock markets were highly volatile, with prices being driven far too high during an upswing and much too low in a downswing. Even many people on Wall Street now admit that the last few years have demonstrated this process at work on the upside, and wonder whether we are about to witness the same thing on the downside.

After his experience in the twenties, Keynes had little time for sophisticated trading strategies that were supposed to deliver high returns with minimal risk, such as diversifying investments over a large number of companies. "It is a mistake to think that one spreads one's risk by spreading too much between enterprises about which one knows little and has no reason for special confidence," he wrote in 1934. These days, Keynes's strategy of concentrating his investments in a few firms is highly unfashionable, but one person who has stuck to it is Warren Buffett, the sixty-eight-year-old chairman of Berkshire Hathaway. Like Keynes, Buffett could never see the sense in spreading his money around for the sake of it, and instead made heavy investments in a handful of companies, such as Coca-Cola, Gillette, and American Express.

The use of mathematical models to predict the future, another common pursuit on Wall Street these days, was a particular bugbear of Keynes's. He wrote his dissertation on the foundations of probability theory, and he always remained suspicious of economic techniques that claimed "false precision beyond what either the method or the statistics actually available can support." He believed that economics was "a branch of logic," not a "pseudo-natural science," and he warned against using figures that "one can be quite sure won't apply next time." Most contemporary economists would argue, with some justification, that Keynes went too far when he claimed that the use of statistical models in economics amounted to "charlatanism," but the unfortunate investors in Long-Term Capital Management, whose investment strategy was based on complex statistical models that could, supposedly, discern predictable patterns in the prices of stocks and bonds around the world, might think he had a point.

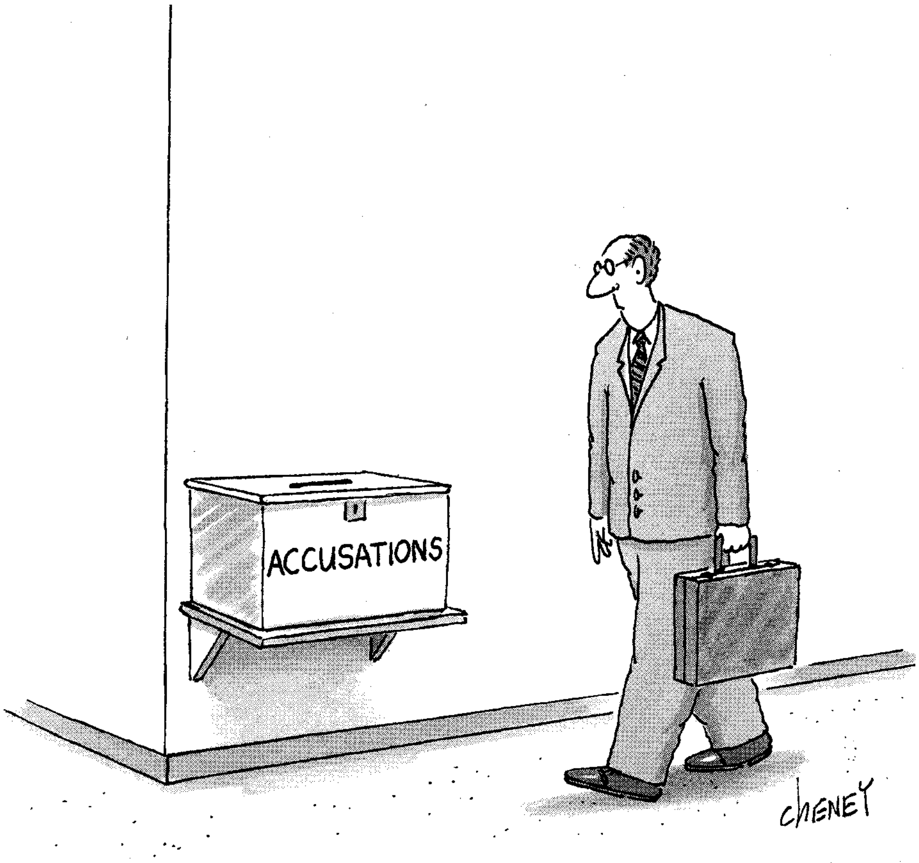


FOLLOWING his triumph at Bretton Woods, Keynes returned to London in late August of 1944. During the following year and a half, he helped negotiate a loan from the American government to tide the British economy over the transition to peace. Keynes had always been dubious about the way Washington worked, and the discussions about the loan, which dragged on until late 1945, confirmed his worst fears. Meetings seemed to go on forever, and American officials frequently infuriated him by disappearing to take phone calls. "Indeed in Washington the Ancient Mariner would have found it necessary to use a telephone to detain the wedding guest," he complained. "For it is only on the telephone that one can obtain undivided attention. If you seek an interview, your American friend will spend half the time talking on the telephone to all quarters of the compass, until in despair you return to your own office and you yourself ring him up, when you can expect to secure his concentrated mind for as long as you like, while someone else wastes his time keeping a date with him in the chair you have so wisely vacated." To make matters worse, Fred Vinson, the new Secretary of the Treasury, didn't appreciate Keynes's biting wit, and many influential members of Congress were opposed to lending the British any more money at all. President Truman, who took office following Roosevelt's death, in April of 1945, eventually agreed to extend almost four and a half billion dollars in credit to London, but the negotiations were far more arduous and acrimonious than they had been at Bretton Woods.

In December of 1945, when Keynes arrived back in England, he was exhausted and ill. His health never fully recovered. In March, 1946, he made a final visit to the United States, for the initial meeting of the Stabilization Fund and the Bank for Reconstruction and Development, but that trip didn't go well, either. "The Americans at the top seem to have no conception of international cooperation; since they are the biggest partners they think they have the right to call the tune on every point," he wrote. A few weeks later, he retreated to his country home for an Easter holiday, and there he suffered a fatal heart attack; he was sixty-two.

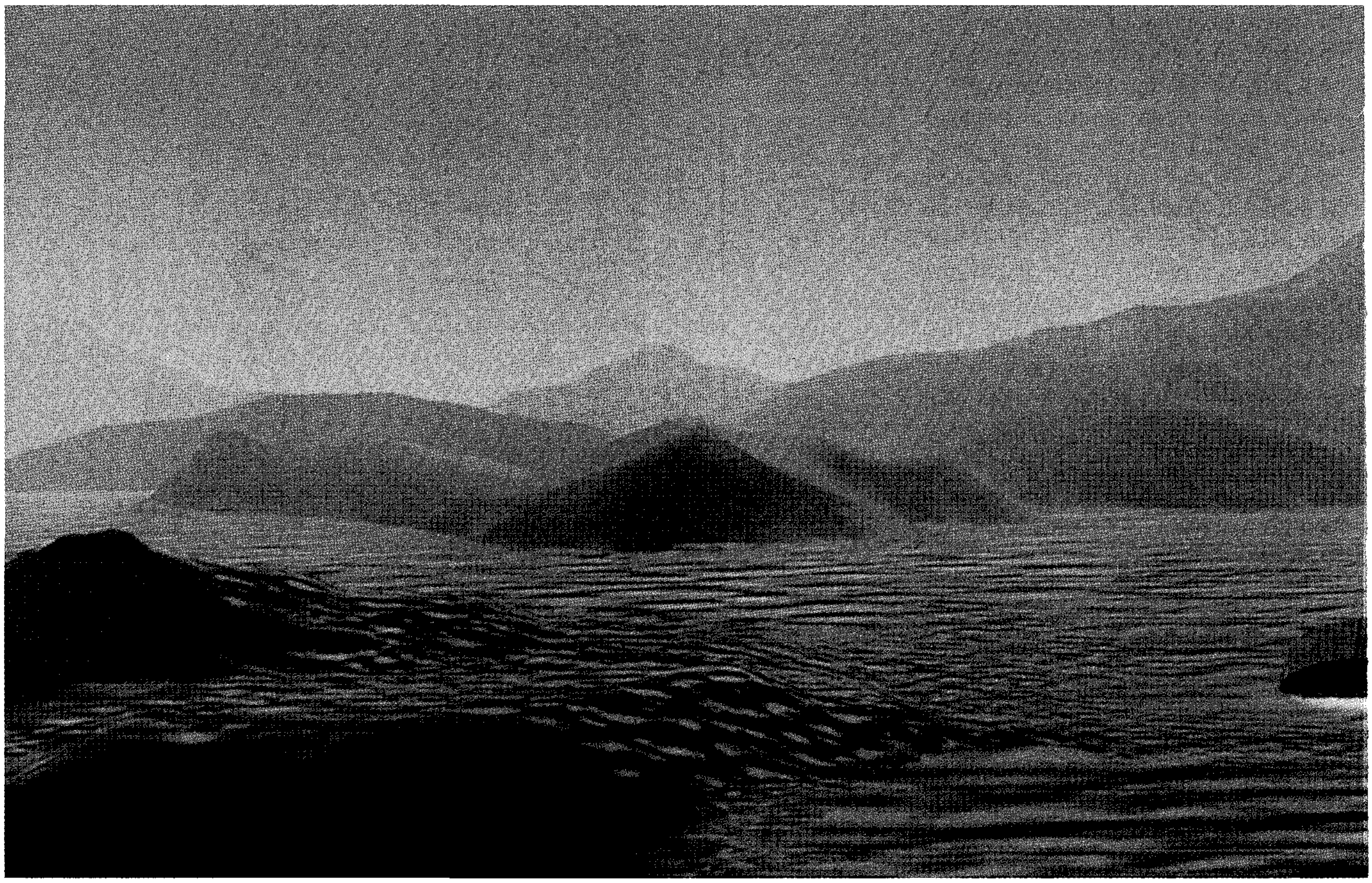
His legacy proved to be twenty-five years of the most successful economic performance the world has seen. Ultimately, the reasons for that success had as much to do with politics as with economics—a point that was made almost thirty years ago by Louis Rasminsky, who was then the head of the Bank of Canada. "Something very important happened at Bretton Woods in 1944, and that was that the world consciously took control of the international monetary system," Rasminsky said. Today, with the world economy on the brink of a major calamity, it is again time for the world's politicians to exert authority over the international financial system. Despite the failure of this month's meeting in Washington, the situation is far from hopeless. There are numerous policy proposals that could be explored if the political will was there, beginning with an effort to turn the I.M.F. into an effective lender of the last resort, which is what Keynes advocated. At the moment, the Fund is neither one thing nor another; its existence encourages international investors to take risks, but it doesn't have the budget or the authority to act quickly and preëmptively in order to prevent runs on individual countries, such as those experienced by Thailand, South Korea, and Indonesia.

President Clinton's recent proposal to provide prearranged I.M.F. credit lines for countries that have followed sound policies represents a start (as does Congress's willingness last week to fund the United States' eighteen-billion-dollar contribution to the I.M.F.), but it doesn't go far enough. If the I.M.F. is to become a credible institution, it needs a limited mission (to provide liquidity in international crises, not to act as a nation-builder), a more effective management structure (one much less susceptible to domination by the United States), and a larger capital base. In theory, the Fund still has about a hundred and ninety billion dollars to spend, but much of that money has already been committed. The bailouts of Korea, Thailand, and Indonesia cost about a hundred and twenty billion dollars (not all of which was provided by the I.M.F.), and a rescue package for Brazil, which is currently being discussed in Washington, could well cost upward of thirty billion.



Reconceiving the I.M.F. is only one part of the solution, however. To insure that the Fund's money is not wasted, as it was in Russia, the world's financial markets need a regulator to do the same job that bodies like the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation do in the United States. One option worth considering was put forward by John Eatwell, of Cambridge University, and Lance Taylor, of the New School. Under their plan, countries would not be eligible for any money from the I.M.F. or the World Bank unless their banks and brokerage houses met the standards of soundness and probity laid down by a new World Financial Authority. "If you want an open international financial market, then you are going to have to set up the international institutions to run it," Eatwell told me. "Our proposals are trying to put the necessary structure in place, just as Bretton Woods did."

Finally, the politicians need to control the flow of speculative capital, which has proved to be so devastating in Asia. Some countries have already shifted in this direction, and their policies have met with a measure of success. Malaysia recently decreed that all foreign investments must remain in the country for at least a year, and since then its stock market and its currency have rallied. Chile, which imposed a hefty tax on foreign financial investments that stayed in the country for less than a year, has been less severely hit than countries such as Brazil and Venezuela, which allow capital to move more freely. Policies like these are unpopular with Washington policymakers, but that simply illustrates Keynes's famous point that "practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist"—in this case, Adam Smith. However, even Smith, the great apostle of laissez-faire, conceded that interference with the free market is justified in certain circumstances. Keynes merely amplified this point, and demonstrated that capitalism, if left to its own devices, is chronically unstable. Unless this lesson is acted upon soon, it may be relearned in the same way that it was learned during the nineteen-thirties. ♦



JULIAN BAUM/SPL/PHOTO RESEARCHERS

FICTION

THE JANITOR ON MARS

Reflections on the future of the universe.

BY MARTIN AMIS

POP JONES was telling the child why he couldn't watch the news that day: "Special regulation, Ash. You have to be eighteen. It's like an X rating."

"I want to see the Martian."

"Well, you can't. And he's not strictly speaking a Martian. They think he must be some sort of robot."

"He's the man on Mars."

"He, or it, is the *janitor* on Mars."

And Pop Jones was the janitor on Earth—more specifically, the janitor of Shepherds Lodge, the last nonprivatized orphanage in England. Remote, decrepit, overcrowded, and all-male, the place was, of course, a Shangri-La of pedophilia. And Pop Jones was, of course, a pedophile, like everybody else on the staff. To use the (rather misleading) jargon, he was a "functional" pedophile—which is to say, his pedophilia *didn't* function. Pop Jones was an inactive pedophile, unlike his hyperactive colleagues. He had never interfered with any of the boys in his care, not once.

The child, Ashley, a long-suffering nine-year-old, said, "They're taking us to the beach. I want to stay and see the robot."

"To the beach! Remember to take your starblock."

"But I want to starbathe."

"You'll get starstroke out there."

"I want a startan."

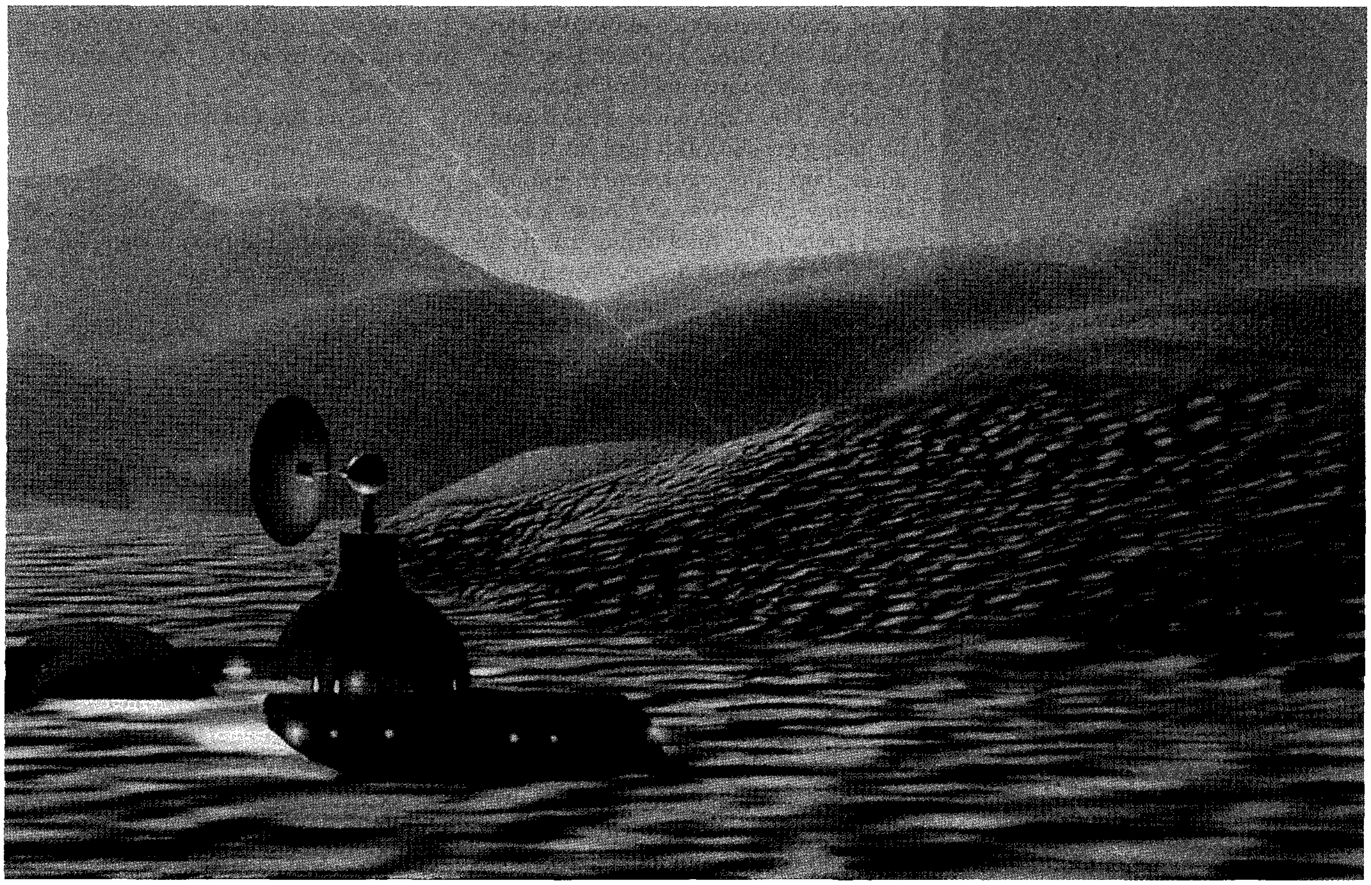
"A startan? You'll get starburn!"

No one called it the sun anymore: the nature of the relationship had changed. It was June 25, 2049, and every television on Earth would soon be featuring a live interview with the janitor on Mars.

Outside, the boys were being marshalled into queues under the awning as the first electric bus pulled up. Each of them clutched his white umbrella. Pop Jones was pleased to see that Ashley was wearing his starglasses and his starhat. All the children were flinching up at the sky. Each mouth wore a wary sneer.

THE thing had been building for nine months.

On September 30, 2048, at 12:45 P.M., West Coast time, Incarnacion Buttruguena-Hume, the most frankly glamorous of CNN's main newscasters, received an encrypted message on her P.D.A. Incarnacion's computer failed to recognize the cipher but then quickly cracked it. The message was written in the Blacksmith code, unused for a century and considered



obsolescent in the Second World War. It began, "CKBTaTCaAIaCaBTKaCa": "Dear Incarnacion." Decoded, the message said, "FORGIVE THE INTRUSION, BUT I'M GOING TO BE COMING IN ON YOUR AIRTIME TONIGHT. I HAVE NEWS FOR YOU. I'M THE JANITOR ON MARS. TALK TO PICK AROUND FIVE-THIRTY."

Pick was Pickering Hume, Incarnacion's husband, who, non-coincidentally (it was soon supposed), worked in the public-relations and fund-raising departments of SETI—or Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence. Incarnacion called Pick right away at his office in Mountain View. They discussed the transmission: which of their friends, they wondered, was responsible for it? But at 17:31 Pick called back. In a clogged whisper he told her that they were receiving a regularly repeated radio signal on the hydrogen line from the Tharsis Ridge on Mars, in straight Morse. The Morse from Mars was saying, "PICK—CALL INCARNACION."

It was five-forty in Los Angeles. Within fifteen minutes the sat links were engaged and the floor of Incarnacion's studio was filling up with astronomers, cosmologists, philosophers, historians, science-fiction writers, millenarians, Rapturists, U.F.O. abductees, churchmen, politicians, and five-star generals, gathered for a story that just kept on breaking—that went twenty-four-hour and stayed that way. On the stroke of six o'clock the screen turned a rusty red.

Pop Jones himself was watching, on that day, along with every other adult in the building, having been called to the Common Room by the principal, Mr. Davidge. The screen went red, then white. And then the message appeared, unscrolling upward, B-movie style, in heroic, backward-leaning capitals. It said:

"GREETINGS, DNA, FROM HARMAKHIS, THE RED ONE, AS YOUR EGYPTIANS CALLED OUR WORLD, OR NERGAL, AS YOUR BABYLONIANS HAD IT: THE STAR OF DEATH. GREETINGS FROM MARS. OUR TWO PLANETS HAVE MUCH IN COMMON. OUR DIURNAL MOTION IS SIMILAR, AS IS THE OBLIQUITY OF OUR RESPECTIVE ECLIPTICS. YOU HAVE OCEANS, AN ATMOSPHERE, A MAGNETOSPHERE. SO DID WE. YOU ARE LARGER. YOU ARE CLOSER IN. WE COOLED QUICKER. BUT LIFE ON OUR PLANETS WAS SEEDED MORE OR LESS COINSTANTANEOUSLY—A DIFFERENCE OF A FEW MONTHS, WITH EARTH TAKING TECHNICAL SENIORITY. OUR WORLDS, AS I SAY, ARE SIMILAR, AND WERE ONCE MORE SIMILAR. BUT OUR HISTORIES RADICALLY AND SPECTACULARLY DIVERGE.

"IT'S GONE NOW, VANISHED, ALL MARTIAN LIFE. AND I'M WHAT REMAINS. I AM THE JANITOR ON MARS. AND I HAVE BEEN WATCHING YOU, TRIP-WIRED TO MAKE CONTACT AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME. THAT TIME HAS COME. LET'S TALK.

"I'LL BE IN TOUCH WITH NASA ABOUT LAUNCH WINDOWS. ALSO SOME TIPS ABOUT CLIMBING YOUR GRAVITY WELL: A FUEL THING. DUPLICATES OF ALL COMMUNICATIONS WILL GO TO CNN AND THE NEW YORK *TIMES*. LET'S PLAY THIS ONE STRAIGHT, PLEASE.

"YOU NEVER WERE ALONE. YOU JUST THOUGHT YOU WERE. AND HOW COULD YOU EVER HAVE THOUGHT THAT? DNA, MAKE HASTE. I AM IMPATIENT TO SEE YOU WITH MY OWN EYES. COME."

UNDER his dirty white umbrella, Pop Jones limped quickly across the courtyard. He glanced up. Although his flesh wore the pallor of deep bachelorhood, Pop's face often looked childish, tentative; this, plus his pertly plump backside, his piping yet uneffeminate voice, and his chastity, combined to earn him his nickname. His nickname was Eunuch. (His forename, moreover, was Enoch.) The children he treated with bantering geniality. But with his fellow-adults Pop Jones was a *janitor*, through and through; he was *all* janitor, a janitor's janitor, idle, disobliging, truculent, withdrawn. And, in his person, defiantly unclean. Overhead the star wriggled goopily in the sky, with slipped penumbra, like one of the cataracts it so prolifically dispensed. The sun hadn't changed. The sky had. The sky had fallen sick, but everybody said it was getting better again. Pop limped on up the steps to the Sanatorium.

He passed the medical officer's nook and glanced sideways into the old surgical storeroom, now a mini-gym, where two male nurses were talcing their hands for the bench press. They glanced back at him, pausing. Pop Jones could feel the hum of isolation in his ears. Yes, he thought, a dreadful situation. Quite dreadful. The whole moral order. But someone has to . . . The patient he had come to see was an eleven-year-old called Timmy. Timmy suffered from various learning disabilities (he was always injuring himself by falling over or walking into walls), and Pop Jones felt a special tenderness for him. Many of the boys at Shepherds Lodge, it had to be said, were somewhat soiled and complaisant, if not thoroughly debauched. Indeed, on warm evenings the place had the feel of an antebellum bordello, with boys in pajamas straddling windowsills—training their hair, reading mail-order magazines—to the sound of some thrummed guitar. . . . Timmy wasn't like that. Sealed off in his own mind, Timmy had an inviolability that everyone had respected. Until now. Pop and Timmy were chaste—they were the innocents! *That* was their bond. . . . To be clear, it is not youth alone that attracts the pedophile. The pedophile, for some reason, wants carnal knowledge of the carnally ignorant: a top-heavy encounter, involving lost significance. As far as the child is concerned, of course, that lost significance doesn't stay lost, but lingers forever. On some level Pop Jones sensed the nature of this disparity, this preëmption, and it kept him halfway straight. The merest nudge or nuzzle, every now and then. His use of the bathhouse peepholes was now strictly rationed. In any given month, you could count his rootings in the laundry baskets on the fingers of one hand.

"How are you this morning, my lad?"

"Car," said Timmy.

Timmy was alone in the six-bed ward. A TV roosted high up on the opposite wall: it showed the planet Mars, filling half the screen now, and getting ever closer.

"Timmy, try to remember. Who did this to you, Timmy?"

"House," said Timmy.

The boy was not in San for one of his workaday injuries, something like a burn or a twisted ankle. Timmy was in San because he had been raped, three days ago. Mr. Caroline had found him in the potting shed, lying on the duckboards, weeping. And from then on Timmy had lapsed into the semi-autistic bemusement that had marked his first two years at Shepherds Lodge: the state that Pop Jones, and others, liked to think they had coaxed him out of. The flower had partly opened. It had now closed again.

"Timmy, try to remember."

"Floor," said Timmy.

Rape—non-statutory rape—was vanishingly rare at Shepherds Lodge: rape flew in the face of everything its staff cherished and honored. Intergenerational sex, in that Gothic mass on the steep green of the Welsh border, was of course ubiquitous, but they had a belief system that accounted for that. Its signal precept was that the children liked it.

"Who did this, Timmy?" Pop persisted, because Timmy was perfectly capable of identifying and, after a fashion, naming every carer on the payroll. The principal, Mr. Davidge, he called Day. Mr. Caroline he called Ro. Pop Jones himself he called Jo. Who did this? Everyone, including Pop, was edging toward a wholly unmanageable suspicion: *Davidge* had done it. It seemed inescapable. The last time something like this had happened (in fact a much milder case, involving the "inappropriate fondling" of a temporary referral from Birmingham), Davidge had pursued the matter with Corsican rigor. But the investigation into the attack on Timmy seemed oddly stalled: three days had passed without so much as an anal-dilation test. Davidge's shrugs and prevarications, by a process of political trickledown, now threatened a general dissolution, Pop sensed. The janitor was on his own

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here. Already he felt at the limit of his moral courage.

"Was it . . . Day?" he asked, leaning nearer.

"Dog," said Timmy.

The two male nurses—the two reeking sadists in their sleeveless T-shirts—were snorting rhythmically under their weights. Pop called out to them, "Excuse me? Excuse me? Mr. Fitzmaurice, if you please. You will be turning this television off, I hope. The boys are not permitted to watch the news today. It's an official order. From the Department Head."

Fitzmaurice sat up on his bench and shouted, "If I do that the whole fucking system goes down. Every TV in the fucking gaff."

Pop Jones, as a janitor, had to bow to the logic of that. He said, "Then he'll have to be moved. It may be quite unsuitable for children. There may be some bad language. Anything could happen up there."

Fitzmaurice shrugged.

"Car," said Timmy.

Pop looked at the TV. Mars now filled the screen.

THIS day many questions would be answered. Not the least pressing (many felt) was: Why now? What was the "trip wire"? How did you explain the timing of the contact from the janitor on Mars?

As recently as 2047, after many a probe and flyby, NASA had successfully completed the first manned mission to Mars. The earthling cosmonauts spent three months on the Red Planet and returned with almost half a ton of it in sample form. Preliminary analysis of this material was completed and made public in the autumn of 2048. The findings seemed unambiguous. True, the layer of permafrost proved that water had once flowed on the Martian surface, and in stupendous quantities, as was already clear from the flood tracks in its gorge and valley systems. But otherwise the Sojourner 3 mission could come up with nothing to puncture the verdict of ageless sterility. So the question remained: Why wasn't contact made *then*? In the interim, fifteen hundred new telecommunications satellites had gone into orbit; as the janitor on Mars himself pointed out, in one of his earlier communiqués, Earth had practically walled itself up with space junk. Five hundred units had to be blown out of the sky to clear a lane for Sojourner 4.

"LET *me remind you that these images . . . from the camera in the nose cone of the trailing vessel. Lacking an ozone layer . . . effectively sterilized by solar ultraviolet radiation. The atmosphere . . . almost as thin as our best laboratory vacuums. We can see Phobos, the larger . . . a mere thirty-five hundred miles distant as compared with our moon's . . . Deimos, the second satellite, is overhead . . . as bright to the eye as Venus.*"

The TV-viewing armchair in Pop Jones's terrible old Y-front of a bedroom (with its Bovril tins and clouded tooth mugs) had become steeped in his emanations over the years. Anyone else, settling into it, would have instantly succumbed to projectile nausea, and would have shot up out of it, as from an ejector seat. But not Pop: in his armchair he felt fully alive. Look at him now, his tongue idling on his lower teeth, as he watched the screen with the kind of awe he usually reserved for only the most sincere and accurate pedography, freely available from many an outlet in Shepherds Lodge (and quite regularly starring its inmates). He had seen this image before—everyone had: a Colorado made of rust before a strangely proximate horizon. But the planet was now in some sense a living Mars, and life invested it everywhere with menace. The thin mist looked like fat on the meaty crimson of the regolith, and shapes seemed to form and change in the shadows of the sharp ravines. . . .

For a second the picture was lost. Then the voice of Incarnacion Buttruguena-Hume—warmly aspirated, extravagantly human—continued:

"*In some ways Mars is a small world. Its surface area is only a third of ours, and its mass only a tenth. But in other ways Mars is a big world. Its canyons . . . than ours, its peaks far higher. One of its gorges, the Valles . . . Grand Canyon to shame. And—yes: we're approaching it now. This is Olympus Mons, seventeen miles high—three Everests—but sloping so gradually that it casts almost no shadow. It resembles the shield volcanoes in . . . I have just been told that this vessel is no longer under our control. He's bringing us in. We . . . We . . .*"

And you saw it: in utter silence but with sky-shaking effort, the mountain was opening, its segmented upper flanks now bending backward like a nest full of titanic chicks with their beaks open

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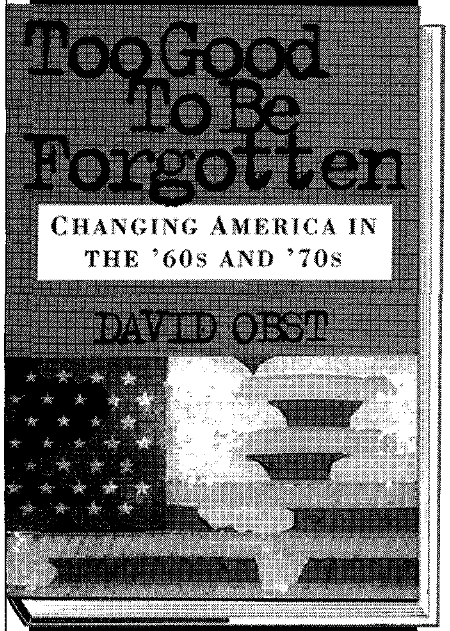
—Seymour M. Hersh



"David Obst is as crazy as the period he writes about. His stories make me both proud and ashamed to be part of his generation."

—P.J. O'Rourke

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wanting food. The leading vessel, Nobel 1, strained above these battlements, and plummeted. Nobel 2, the P.O.V. vessel, followed. During its descent Pop felt that he was riding an elevator downward, the innards of the edifice thrumming past him in the dark but much too quickly—with all the gluttonous acceleration of free fall.

Every screen on Earth stayed black. Then these numerals appeared in a pale shade of green: 45:00. And started going 44:59, 44:58, 44:57...

In fact it was twice that many minutes before anything happened.

A weak light came up and the camera jerked around in consternation, as if violently roused from deep slumber. There were shadows, figures. You could hear mumbling and coughing. And one of their number was calling out in a strained and self-conscious voice, "Hello! . . . Hello? . . . Hello! . . . Hello?"

"*Everything is fine here. We've been waiting in this*... room. *The vessels docked smoothly and we just followed the arrowed signs. One of the Laureates fell over a moment ago, but was unhurt. And for a moment Miss World had a minor problem with her air supply. We are wearing filament-heated mesh suits with*..."

There had of course been enormous controversy about who would go, and who would not go, to meet the janitor on Mars. Everyone on Earth was up for it. After all, there was no longer anything frightening or even exotic about space travel. In the thirties and forties, before the satellites really thickened up, lunar tourism expanded to the extent that parts of the moon's surface now resembled a wintry Torremolinos. Granted, the moon was a mere quarter of a million miles away, and Mars, at the current opposition, was almost fifty million. But everyone was up for it. No ticket had ever been hotter. There were sixty-five seats. And seven billion people in the queue.

They had to contend not just with each other but also with the janitor on Mars, who, in a number of communications, had proved himself a brisk and abrasive stipulator. For example, he had at the outset refused to countenance any clerics or politicians. Later, when pressed by massive referenda to find a couple of seats for the Pope and the U.S. President, the janitor on Mars caused far more hurt than mirth when he sent the following E-mail to the New York *Times* ("Print the obscenity in full," he cautioned, "or I switch to the *Post*"): "Don't send me no fucking monkeys, O.K.? Monkeys no good. Just send me the talent." He wanted scientists, poets, painters, musicians, mathematicians, philosophers, "and some examples of male and female pulchritude." He wanted no more media than Incarnacion Buttruguena-Hume and her camera operator (she was also allowed to bring Pick). The haggling continued well into the countdown at Cape Canaveral. In the end there were twenty-eight hard-science Laureates on board Nobels 1 and 2, as well as several fashion models, Miss World, some NASA personnel, and various searchers and reachers from various branches of the humanities. The janitor on Mars had been particularly obdurate about Miss World, even though the contest she had won was by now an obscure affair, disputed between a couple of hundred interested onlookers in the Marriott at the Buffalo airport.

This weakness of the janitor's—for harsh language and harsh sarcasm—was the focus of much terrestrial discussion and much disquiet. Even those who shared this weakness seemed to sense a breach of fundamental cosmic decorum. The pop psychologist Udi Ertigan put many minds at rest with the following suggestion (soon adopted as the consensus view): "I see here a mixture of high and low styles. The high style feels programmed, the low style acquired. Acquired from whom? From us! Our TV transmissions go out into space at the speed of light. What we're dealing with is a robot who's watched too many movies." Make no mistake, though: the janitor on Mars was for real. At first, the doubters doubted and the trimmers trimmed. But the janitor on Mars was definitely for real. His brief introductory tips about fuel gelation had revolutionized aeronautics. And every couple of weeks he stirred up one discipline after the other with his mordant memos on such things as protein synthesis, the Coriolis force, slow-freeze theory, tensor calculus, chaos and K-entropy, gastrulation in developmental biology, sentential variables, butterfly catastrophe, Champernowne's number, and the *Entscheidungsproblem*. The janitor on Mars had promised to disclose a formula for cold fusion ("I'm no expert," he wrote, "and I'm having some trouble dumbing down the math") and a cure for cancer ("Or how about prevention? Or would you settle for *remission*?"). "Your gerontology,” he noted, “is in its infancy. Working together, we can double life expectancy within a decade.” On cosmological issues—and on Martian history—he usually refused to be drawn, saying that there were “some things you [couldn’t] talk about on the phone”; and, besides, he didn’t want “to cheapen the trip. But I will say this,” he said. “The Big Bang and the Steady State theories are both wrong. Or, to put it another way, they are both right but incomplete. It pains me to see you jerk back from the apparent paradox that the universe is younger than some of the stars it contains. That’s like Clue *One*.”

Iain Henryson, Lucasian Professor at Cambridge, described the mathematics that accompanied this memo as “ineffable. In every sense.” The janitor on Mars was often petulant, insensitive, facetious, and sour, and not infrequently profane. But Earth trusted his intelligence, believing, as it always had, in the ultimate indivisibility of the intelligent and the good.

It was in any case a time of hope for the blue planet. The revolution in consciousness during the early decades of the century, a second enlightenment, having to do with self-awareness as a species, was at last gaining political will. None of the biospherical disasters had quite gone ahead and happened. Humankind was still bailing water, but the levels had all ceased rising and some had started to fall. And for the first time in Earth’s recorded history no wars were being contested on its surface.

Pop Jones settled back into his armchair, then, with all the best kinds of thought and feelings. If things did start to get rough he would go and see Davidge about getting Timmy moved at halftime—during the intermission demanded by the janitor on Mars.

“*We are wearing filament-heated mesh suits with autonomous air supply, but according to Colonel Hicks’s instruments the air is breathable and the temperature is rising. It was close to freezing at first, but now it’s evidently no worse than chilly. And damp. I’m removing my headpiece . . . now. Yup. Seems O.K. . . . Gravity is at one g. I have no sense of lightness or hollowness. We seem to be in some kind of reception area, but our lights don’t work and until a minute ago we had only the faintest illumination. I can hear . . .*”

You could hear the squawk of tortured rivets or hinges, and high on the wall was abruptly thrown a slender oblong of light, which briefly widened as a shadow moved past its source. Then the door closed on the reëstablished gloom. Pop Jones nodded in sudden agreement. Whether or not the janitor on Mars was a genuine Martian (and there had been much speculation earlier: a hoax, no, but was he maybe a lure?), he was, in Pop’s view, definitely a genuine janitor. Now kill the lights again, thought Pop, and turn off the heat. He listened expectantly for the clank of buckets, the skewering of big old keys in cold damp locks. But all he heard was the slow clop of footsteps. Then, causing pain to the dark-adapted eye, the lights came on with brutal unanimity.

“Welcome, DNA. So this is the double helix on the right-handed scroll. DNA, I extend my greetings to you.”

When you could focus you saw that the janitor on Mars sat at a table on a

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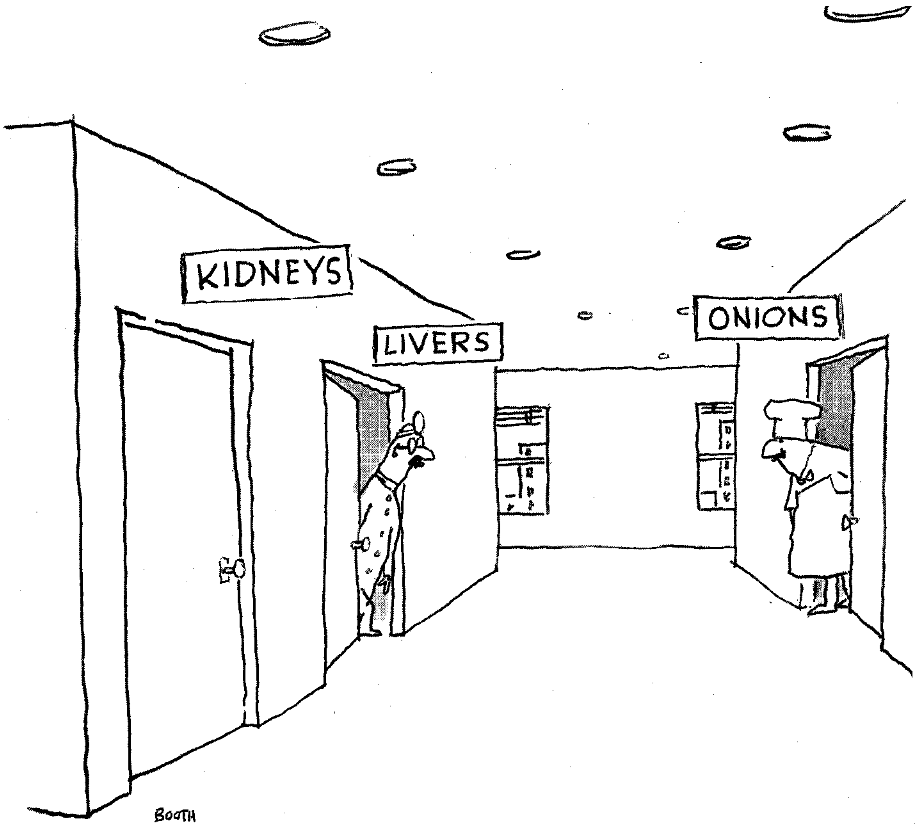


raised stage: an unequivocal robot wearing blue-black overalls and a shirt and tie. His face was a dramatically featureless beak of burnished metal, his hands clawlike, intricate, fidgety. The accent was not unfamiliar: semi-educated American. He sounded like a sports coach—a sports coach addressing other, lesser sports coaches. But he had no mouth to frame the words and they had a buzzy, boxy tone: an interior sizzle. The janitor on Mars tossed an empty clipboard onto the table and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I apologize for the condition of these modest furnishings. This room is something I threw together almost exactly a century ago, on August 29, 1949: the day it became clear that Earth was featuring two combatants equipped with nuclear arms. I kept meaning to update it. But I could never be fucked. . . . Human beings, don't look that way. Miss World, don't crinkle your nose at me. And dispense, in general, with your expectations of grandeur. There *is* such a thing as cosmic censorship. But the universe is profoundly and essentially profane. I think you'll be awed by some of the things I'm going to tell you. Other emotions, however, will predominate. Emotions like fear and contempt. Or better say terror and disgust. Terror and disgust. Well. First—the past."

By now two cameras were established back to back at the base of the podium. You saw the janitor on Mars; and then you saw his audience (seated on tin chairs in an ashen assembly hall: wood panelling, drab drapes on the false windows, a blackboard, the American and Soviet flags). In the front row sat Incarnacion Buttruguena-Hume and her husband, Pickering. Tentatively Incarnacion raised her hand.

"Yes, Incarnacion."

She blushed, half-smiled, and said, "May I ask a preliminary question, sir?"

The janitor on Mars gave a minimal nod.

"Sir, only two years ago there were human beings on your *doorstep.* Why—?"

"Why didn't I make myself known to you then? There's a good reason for that: the trip wire. Patience, please. All will become clear. If I may revert to the program? The past . . . To recap: Earth and Mars are satellites of the same second-generation, metal-rich, main-sequence yellow dwarf on the median disk of the Milky Way. Our planets seized and formed some four and a half billion years ago. Smaller, and farther out, we cooled quicker. Which you might say gave us a head start."

With a brief snort of amusement or perhaps derision the janitor on Mars leaned backward in his chair and thoughtfully intermeshed his slender talons.

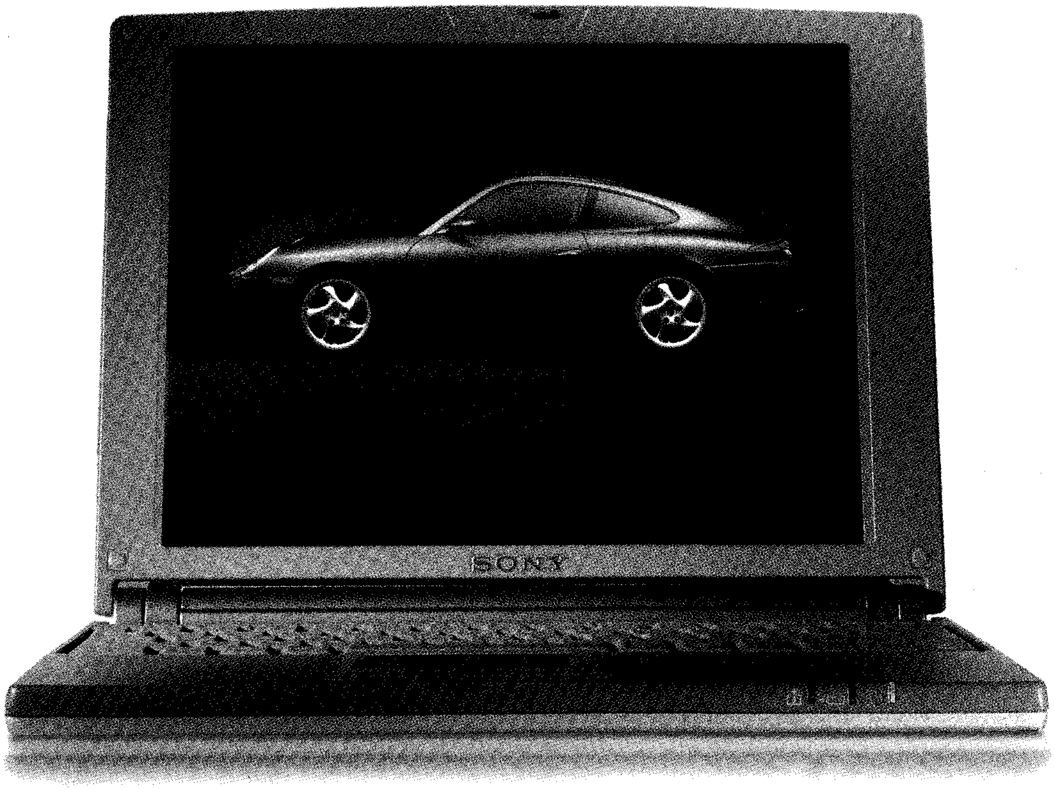
"Now, we two had the same prebiotic chemistry and were pollinated by the same long-periodical comet: the Alpha Comet, as we called her, which visits the solar system every hundred and thirteen million years. Life having been established on Earth, you then underwent that process you indulgently call 'evolution.' Whereas we were up and running pretty much right away. I mean, in a scant three hundred million years. While you were just some fucking disease. Some fucking germ, stinking up the shoreline. And I can promise you that ours was the more typical planetary experience: self-organizing complexity, with remorseless teleological drive. Martian civilization flourished, with a few ups and downs, for almost three billion years, reaching its—what shall I call it?—its apotheosis, its *climax,* five hundred million years ago, at which time dinosaurs, as you say, ruled the Earth. Forty-three million years later, Martian life was extinguished, and I, already emplaced, was activated, to await the trip wire."

Miss World said, "Sir? Could you tell us what your people looked like?"

Nicely framed though this question was, the janitor on Mars seemed to take some exception to it.

"Not unlike you now, at first. Somewhat taller and ganglier and hairier. We did not excrete. We did not sleep. And of course we lived a good deal longer than you do—even at the outset. This explains much. You see, DNA isn't any good until it's twenty years old, and by the time you're forty your brains start to rot. Average life expectancy on Mars was at least two centuries even before they started upping it. And of course we pursued aggressive bioengineering from a very early stage. For instance, we soon developed a neurological integrated-circuit technology. What you'd call telepathy. I'm doing it now, though I've added a voice-over for TV viewers. Can you feel that little nasal niggle in your heads? Thoughts, it might please you to learn, are infinity-tending and travel at the speed of light."

The janitor on Mars stood—with a terrible backward-juddering scrape of his metal chair that had Pop Jones frowning with approval as he reached for the tin of Bovril and the spoon. At this stage, Pop's feelings for his Martian counterpart touched many bases: from a sense of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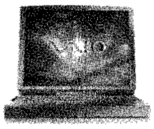
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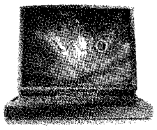
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solidarity all the way to outright hero worship. The air of brusque obstructiveness, the grudge-harboring slant of his gaze; and there was something else, something subtler, that struck Pop as so quintessentially janitorial. *Alertness to the threat of effort:* that was it. The day has come, he thought. The day when at last the janitors . . .

"Now, I don't have all afternoon," said the robot, rather unfeelingly, perhaps (his audience having spent four and a half months in transit). In his black crêpe-soled shoes the janitor on Mars was no more than five feet tall. Yet he filled his space with formidable conviction—a metallic self-sufficiency. He moved like a living being, but he could never be mistaken for one, in any light. And while the face had an expressive range of attitudes and elevations, there was nothing human, nothing avian, nothing remotely organic in its severity. He approached the edge of the stage, saying, "Let's not have this degenerate into Q. and A. I have a program to get through here. We'll go thumbnail and examine our respective journeys in parallel. So: 3.7 billion years ago, life is seeded; 3.4 billion years ago, Martians, as I say, are up and running: 'hunter-gatherers' is your euphemism but 'scavengers' is closer to the truth. At this stage, of course, you're still a bubble of fart gas. Goop. Macrobiotic yogurt left out in the sun. Five centuries go by: Mars is fully industrialized. Another five, and we entered what I guess you'd call our post-historical phase. We called it Total Wealth. All you're managing to do, at this stage, is stink up the estuaries and riverbeds, but meanwhile, over on Mars, we're into quantum gravity, tired light, chromo power, trace drive, cleft conformals, scalar counterfactuals, wave superposition, and orthogonics. We were the masters of our habitat, having gotten rid of all the animals and the oceans and so forth, and the tropospherical fluctuations you call weather. In other words, we were ready."

"Ready for what?" came a voice.

"Now, I'm just a janitor, right? I'm just a, uh, 'robot.' At the time of my manufacture, there was on Mars no distinction between the synthetic and the organic. Everyone was a mix, semi-etherealized, self-duplicating. The natural/mechanical divide belonged to ancient memory. But what you see before you here is a *robot.* Of the crudest kind. And yet my makers, in their wisdom . . . However. In the last five hundred million years I've had access to an information source that was not available to the former denizens of this planet. And with that perspective it's quite clear that Mars was an absolutely average world of its class. A Type-V world, and it did what Type-V worlds invariably do in the post-historical phase."

"Sir?" said Incarnacion. "Excuse me, but is this a grading system? What's a Type-U world?"

"A world that has mined its star."

"What type world is Earth?"

"A Type-Y world."

"What are Type-Z worlds?"

"Dead ones. But I digress. You go post-historical and the question is: Now what? As I say, one and a half billion years ago the Martians were lords of all they surveyed. They were ready. Ready for what? Ready for war."

The robot let this ripple out through the moist air, over the ranked metal seats.

"Yes, that's right. Mars, the Planet of War. Congratulations. The only time you ever get anywhere is when you follow the artistic pulse. You even got the moons. I quote: 'Two lesser stars, or satellites, revolve about Mars whereof the innermost is distant from the center of the primary planet exactly three of his diameters, and the outermost five.' That's not one of your early Mars-watchers, some chump like Schiaparelli or Percival Lowell. That's 'Gulliver's Travels.' Phobos and Deimos. Just so. Fear and Panic. Hitherto, there had never been any disharmony on Mars. Firm but wise world government was proceeding without friction. There was never any of that brawling and scragging that you went in for. Mars had tried peace, but now the time felt right. What *else* was there to do? The population divided, almost arbitrarily, into two sides. One called the other People of Fear. The other called the first People of Panic. There wasn't a dissenting voice on the whole planet. Everyone was absolutely all for it. Imagine two super-futuristic Japanese warrior cults, with architecture by Albert Speer. I guess that'll give you *some* idea.

"They fell into a rhythm. Arms races followed by massive conflicts. They'd pepper each other with all kinds of superexotic weaponry in delightfully elaborate successions of thrusts and feints

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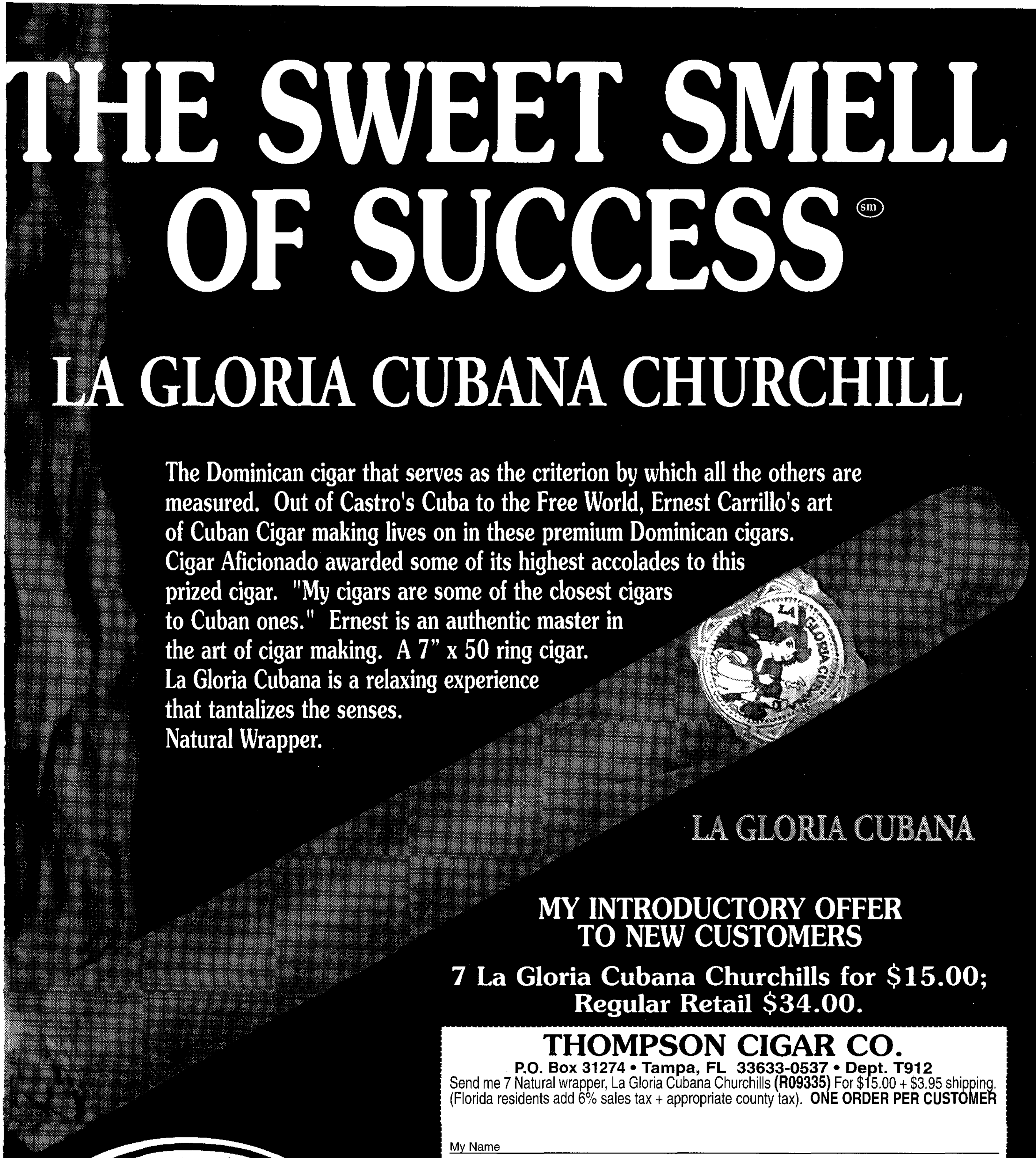

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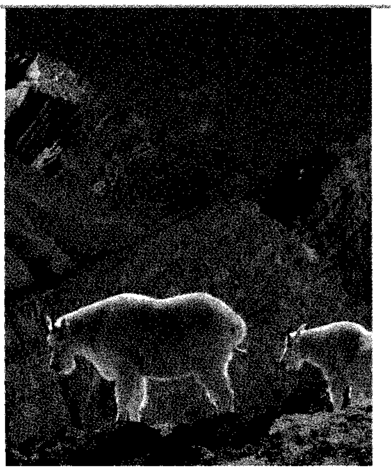

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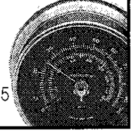

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and counters. But in the end nothing could match the hit of central thermonuclear exchange. They always ended up throwing everything they had at each other, in arsenal-clearing deployments. After the devastation, they rebuilt toward another devastation. No complaints. Shelter culture had come on a long way. Casualties could be patched up as good as new. And fatalities were simply resurrected—except, of course, in cases of outright vaporization. They took their nuclear winters like Martians. The lulls lasted centuries. The battles were over in an afternoon.

"It doesn't make a lot of obvious sense, does it? Later on they tended to argue that it was a necessary stage in their military development. They felt that they were . . . rich in time. They didn't know—as I do—that this happens to all Type-V worlds in the post-historical phase. Without exception. They go insane.

"The Hydrogen War of the Two Nations lasted for a hundred and twelve million years, and was followed, six months later, by the Seventy Million Years' War, in which the use of quantum-gravity weapons exponentially increased the firepower of both sides. There was one more great war—the War of the Strong Nuclear Force—which dragged on for two hundred and eighty-four million years. When they came out of that, there was a general feeling that Mars was in something of a rut. So they decided to stop fucking around. You, at this stage, by the way, were still doing your imitation of a septic tank. Well, and why not? It was a very *good* imitation of a septic tank.

"First there were matters to attend to in our own back yard. People of Fear and People of Panic united to face a common enemy. One found nearby."

The janitor on Mars fell silent; his head, with its steel arc, was interrogatively poised. Vladimir Voronezh, one of the Russian Laureates (his field was galaxy formation), spoke up, saying, "My dear sir, I feel you are now going to tell us that life thrived elsewhere in the solar system, once upon a time."

"Certainly. You've got to lose this habit of thinking about the 'miracle' of life, the stupendous 'accident' of intelligence, and so on. I can assure you that in this universe cognition is as cheap as spit. Being a Type-V world, Mars was extremely insular in its Total Wealth phase. There was no interest in space exploration, despite adequate technology. But we were perfectly well aware of the coexistence of two Type-W worlds: Jupiter and—"

"Jupiter?" This was Lord Kenrick Douglas (quasars): tall, bearded, famous. "Sir, we do know *something* about the solar system. Jupiter is a gas giant. It is wreathed in freezing clouds six hundred miles deep on a shell of liquid hydrogen. Would you tell us what the Jovians looked like? Jellyfish with power packs? Wearing scuba suits, no doubt?"

This last drollery aroused some anxious laughter. The janitor tensed himself to the sound, not with umbrage but with concentration, with efficient curiosity. He said, "Can I ask *you* a question?" He seemed to be addressing Miss World. "Did they laugh just now because they thought he was funny or because they thought he was full of shit? No. Never mind. Let me tell you, Lord Nobel Laureate, that Jupiter wasn't *always* a gas giant. Originally it was much smaller and denser. Rock mantle on an iron-silicate core. But that was before they fucked with Mars. The storm system that you call the Great Red Spot? The Earth-sized zit in its southern tropic? That was ground zero for an NH_3 device we sent their way."

"Ammonia?" asked Voronezh, with a glint in his eye.

"Right. It's something we were very proud of, for a while. We turned their place into a colossal stink bomb without altering its mass. To avoid perturbation problems further down the line. But then we faced perceived disrespect from another quarter, and turned our attention to—"

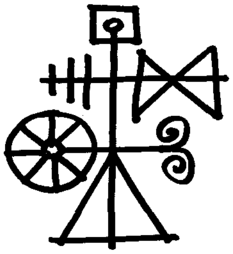
"Don't tell me," said Lord Kenrick. "Venus."

"Wrong direction. No, not Venus. Ceres."

The janitor on Mars waited. Fukiyama (superstrings) said dutifully, "Ceres isn't a planet. It's the biggest rock in the asteroid belt."

Calmly inspecting the tips of his talons, the janitor on Mars said, "Yeah, right. They wanted to play rough, and so . . ." He shrugged and added, "The war with Ceres, in any case, lasted an afternoon. Then for several weeks, on the home planet, there reigned an uneasy peace. Plans were drawn up for a preemptive strike against Earth. Some Martians sensed aggressive potential there. Because—hey. Action on the blue planet. Photosynthesis. Photochemical dissociation of hydrogen sulfide, no less. Light energy used to break the bonds cleaving oxygen to hydrogen and carbon. Bacteria becomes cyanobacteria. Gangway. Where's the fire? But then something happened that changed all our perspectives. Suddenly we knew that all this was bullshit and the real action lay elsewhere.

"Martian astronomers had become intensely interested in a question that you yourselves are still wrestling with. I mean dark matter. The speed with which galaxies rotate suggests that 98.333 per cent of any given galactic mass is invisible and unaccounted for. We went through all the hoops you're going through, and more. What was the dark matter? Massive neutrinos? Failed stars? Slain planets? Black holes? Then we kind of flashed it. The answer had been staring us in the face but we had to overcome a mortal reluctance to confront its truth. There was no dark matter. The galaxies had all been *engineered*, brought on line. Including our own. Many, many cycles ago.



"With immediate unanimity it was decided that this subjection was not going to be tolerated. Our idea was to launch a surprise attack on the galactic core. We figured that our small but measurable chance of success was entirely dependent on surprise—on instantaneity. There was no question of idling coreward at ninety thousand miles per second—we'd just have to *be there* and hit them with absolutely everything we had. So take a guess. How were we going to do it?"

"Wormholes," said Paolo Sylvino (wormholes).

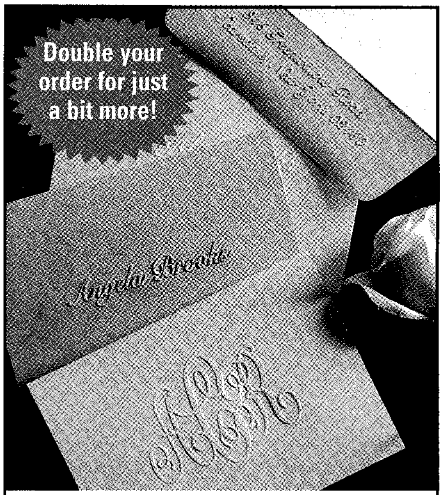
"Wormholes—the evanescent openings into hyperspace, or, more accurately, into parallel universes. 'Ultraspace' was the word we preferred. In crude form the idea's been knocking around on Earth since Einstein. Though I venture to suggest that you have a way to go on the how-to end of it. Here was the setup. We knew that at the core there lay a black hole of some 1.4237 million solar masses, and we knew it had been ringed and tapped. As you're aware, the energy contained within a black hole is stupendous, but it's wholly insufficient to drive a galaxy. The true energy source was something other. And that was the prize we sought. While fitting out the initial strike force we sent recon probes to the galactic core at roughly million-year intervals. Many were lost. Those that returned did so with wiped sensors. One way or another, preparations for the strike consumed four hundred and thirty-seven million years. Then we made our play. On Earth, around now, let it be noted, what do we get but the emergence of organisms visible to the naked eye."

The janitor on Mars sat down and leaned backward and folded his claws behind his head. Ruminatively, he continued, "No one ever thought of this move as a—as a 'mistake,' exactly. Everybody was deeply convinced that this was something we absolutely had to do. But the consequences were somewhat extreme. So long in preparation, the Involvement of the Initial Strike Force with the Core Power was over in nine seconds.

"Our fleet was . . . sent back. Not by wormhole, either. The long way around. We knew we'd lost, but we had to wait three hundred thousand years to find out why. This was an anxious time. We expected intricate reprisals—daily, hourly.

"As military units our ships had been neutralized in the first nanosecond of their appearance at the core, but their sensors were intact and had picked up a great deal of information. Much of it exceedingly depressing, from a Martian point of view. The galactic core had indeed been ringed and tapped. The artificial Loopworld surrounding it had been in place, by our best estimates, for approximately seven hundred and fifty billion years. There was kind of an outpost force guarding the Loopworld. Nothing more. A, uh—a janitor force. Stationed there by entities we would later come to call the Infinity Dogs. Their energy source lay beyond the doorway of the black hole. They were using dead-universe power. Tapping closing universes as they contracted. We also detected beyond Loopworld what I can only describe as a comet depot. And we identified the signature of our own Alpha Comet among the comets parked there.

"Morale was generally low. Almost nihilistic. Martians started to believe, with varying degrees of conviction, that they themselves were mere simulations in a deterministic computer universe. They divided up again. People of Fear. People of Panic. The planet was racked by spasm wars, random, unending. Certain information began to be made available



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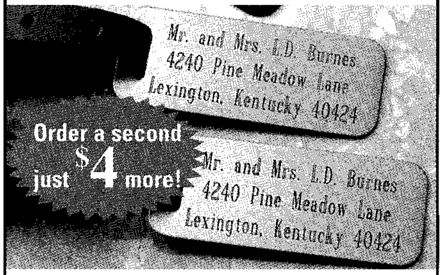

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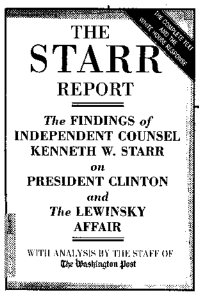
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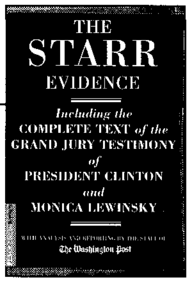
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to us. We learned that the Infinity Dogs had seeded life on Mars—and on Earth, Jupiter, and Ceres—for a purpose. We were middens. That's all. Middens."

"Middens, sir?" This was Incarnacion.

"Yeah, middens. Down on Earth, in Africa, the male rhinos all take a dump beyond the water hole? On Columbus's island of Hispaniola the squinting Carib lines shells on the bank of the riverbed? To demarcate territory. That's a midden. And that's all we were: a message from the Infinity Dogs to a Type-R power called the Core Raiders, saying 'Keep Out.' "

The janitor on Mars let his sickle-like head drop to his chest. Then it reared up again, catching the light, and he said, "Everybody knew that the only honorable or even dignified course was planetary self-slaughter. Such in fact is the usual destiny of Type-V worlds in this phase. Then bolder voices started to be heard. This had never been a thing about winning or losing. This had always been about the *glorious autonomy of Martian will.* As it turned out, Mars's next battle plan involved kamikaze forces and was itself not easily distinguishable from suicide.

"We came up with a ruse de guerre. We *faked* auto-annihilation and moved our whole operation underground. It had to look good, though: we blew off our atmosphere and paralyzed our core, which also spelled goodbye to our magnetosphere. What you see out there—the red plains and valleys, the rocks and pocks on that carpet of iodized rubble—it's just set-dressing. We went underground and waited.

"We undertook an arms buildup in a series of five-million-year plans. Morale was high: ringingly idealistic. *Just one shot.* Just one shot: that was the chant we worked to. We were going to turn that wormhole into a gun barrel. And what was the bullet? We started working on a strictly illegal type of weaponry based on the void-creating yield of false vacuum. A bubble of nothingness expanding at the speed of light. The great voids, the great starless deserts that so puzzle you: they're the sites of incautious false-vacuum deployment. Or false-vacuum accident. Hence also the numberless void universes that populate the Ultraverse. If we could detonate this weapon within the horizon of the core black hole—well, such a deed would rearrange the entire Ultraverse. Conceivably to Martian advantage.

"False-vacuum harnessing, we knew, was exquisitely perilous. It was at this time that I was constructed and emplaced, here, in a shell of pure ultrium (an element not to be found in your periodic table), awaiting activation and the eventual trip wire.

"The Martian Slave Rebellion, as I came to call it, was over in a trillionth of the time it takes the speed of light to cross a proton. That was how long it took for all life on this planet to be extinguished. You see, the I-power had *imposed cosmic censorship on matter.* Poised to form the forbidden configuration, matter was *instructed* to destroy itself. This was four hundred and fifty-seven million years ago. You'd just gone Ordovician. I settled down for the wait.

"But that's enough about Mars. Let's talk about Earth. Before we do that, though—how about our intermission? There are . . . facilities in the rear there. No soap, I'm afraid. Or towels. Or hot water. I suggest you fortify yourselves. After the break we'll do trip wire. I'll give you the bad news first. Then I'll give you the bad news."

POP JONES came out of the rear door, flexed his face in the weak starshine, and skirted the south lawn in his brisk, busy waddle. Keys jounced in the sagging pockets of his black serge suit. It was important, he thought, to walk as quickly as you could. . . . Pop felt deafened, depersonalized. How quiet the place was—no boys on the benches, smoking, grooming, grumbling, coughing, yawning, scratching, gaping. Pop passed through the doors of the Rectory and trotted up the stairs.

He wasn't normally allowed in the Common Room, which received him in sudden silence. Smells of brewery and ashtray, ginger tea, ginger biscuits, ginger hair, and the dead soldiers of many beer cans. And Mr. Davidge, flanked by Mr. Kidd and Mr. Caroline, turning and saying in his tight Welsh voice, "What is it, Jones?"

"It's about Timmy, sir. Timmy Jenkins."

He felt the silence rise another notch. Mr. Davidge waited. Then he said, "What about him?"

"He's in San, sir, as you know. And Fitzmaurice says they can't turn the television off, sir. Without disconnecting the whole—"

"So what's your solution, Jones?"

"Request permission to move him to the Conservatory, sir."

Mr. Davidge glanced at Mr. Kidd and

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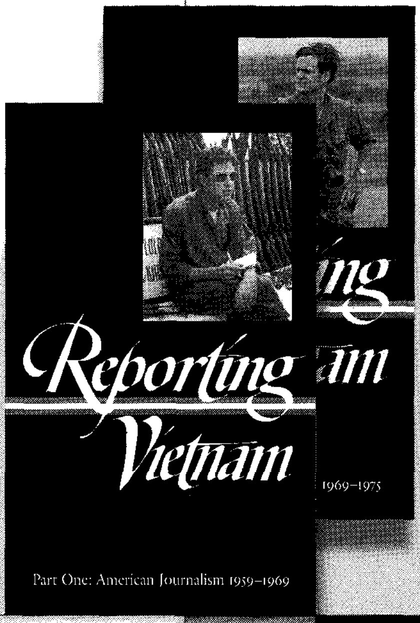
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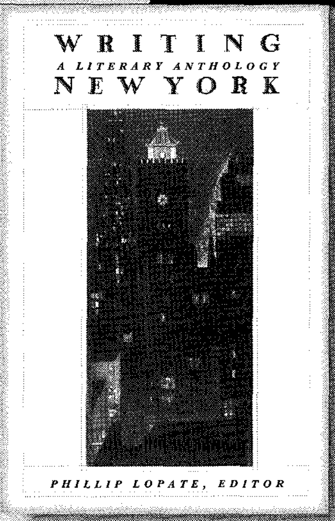
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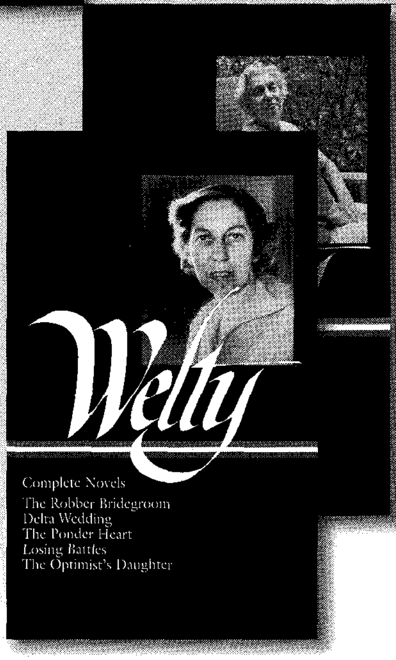
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said, "That's by you, isn't it. Yes, Jones, I think we can leave Timmy to your tender mercies."

They were all smiling with just their upper lips. For a moment Pop Jones felt with frightening certainty that he was in a room full of strangers. He dropped his head and turned.

Largely disused, the Conservatory led off the south end of the main building, a few meaningless twists and turns from Pop Jones's own quarters. He wheeled Timmy in and established him there, warmly wrapped, on a settee. The child lent his limp coöperation. Pop thought back. Three days ago, when Timmy was found . . . that bright morning, the air had glittered with such possibility—possibility, coming up out of the lawn. In all the newspapers and on TV they were analyzing the Martian "key" to the aging process: so elegant, so easily grasped. And everyone was laughing and feeling faint. . . . Pop put his hands on his rounded hips and said, "Dear oh dear, who did this to you, Timmy. It was Day, wasn't it. Dear oh dear, Timmy."

"Floor," said Timmy.

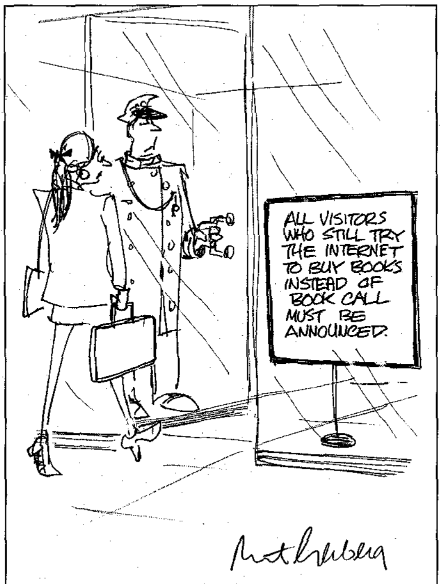
And what becomes of the moral order? he thought, settling back between the jaws of his gray armchair. The screen said: 03:47, 03:46, 03:45.

"IN the Ultraverse there are an infinite number of universes and an infinite number of planets, and in infinity everything recurs an infinite number of times. That's a mathematical fact. But it hasn't panned out in your case. Among the countless trillions of Type-Y worlds so far catalogued, none, I can confidently divulge, presents a picture of such agonizing retardation as Mother Earth. DNA, I have known you since before you were children. I am the witness of all your excruciations! I have watched you hopping along the savannah and hooting around your campfires. I have watched you daub shit on the walls of your caves. I have watched you stumble, grope, err, miscarry, flop, dither, blunder, goof off. I have watched you trying, straining, heaving. I feel . . . I sometimes feel that I, too, have become partly human, over these many, many years."

The conference room was now only feebly illumined. You saw the milky outlines of the listeners and the fumes of their milky breaths, shapes of heads, Incarnacion with Pickering's hand in her lap, Lord Kenrick flexing his shoulders, Voronezh hunched forward with his chin on his palm, Miss World chewing gum and not blinking. Onstage the robot moved among shadows, tracked by the glint of its face. It came forward and sat. The janitor on Mars had changed clothes. The overalls had been discarded: in their place, a rust-red smoking jacket of balding velvet. At first you thought it was a trick of the light, but no: there were two black rivets, like eyes, on the curved axe of the face.

"What was it with you, O double helix? First we've got to factor in the utter failure of your science. Next: terrestrial religion and its scarcely credible tenacity. Everywhere else they just kick around a few creation myths for a while and then snap out of it when science gets going. But you? Everyone else wants 'God,' too—but from a different angle. For us, 'God' isn't top-down. He's bottom-up. Why yearn for a power greater than your own? Why not seek to become it? Even the most affable and conciliatory Martian would have found your Promethean urge despicably weak. O.K., on Mars we had to face—and maybe we never truly faced it—our actual position in the order of being. It goes on and on and up and up. And what do you reach? An entity for whom the Ultraverse is a game of eight ball. And maybe he's just a janitor—the Ultrajanitor. This entity created life on Mars. And what am I supposed to do about Him? *Worship* Him? You must be out of your fucking mind. That's *your* thing. When all is said and done, you *are* very talented adorers.

"Earth would be a curiosity of much interest to cosmoanthropologists if there were any, but the Ultraverse has never concerned itself with information that does no work. In my own musings I adopted the obvious homeostatic view that your science and politics were naturally though brutally depressed in order to foreground your art. Because your art . . . Art is not taken very seriously elsewhere in this universe or in any other. Nobody's interested in art. They're interested in what everybody else is interested in: the superimposition of will. It may be that nobody's interested in it because nobody's any good at it. 'Painters'—if you can call them that—never get far beyond finger smears and stick



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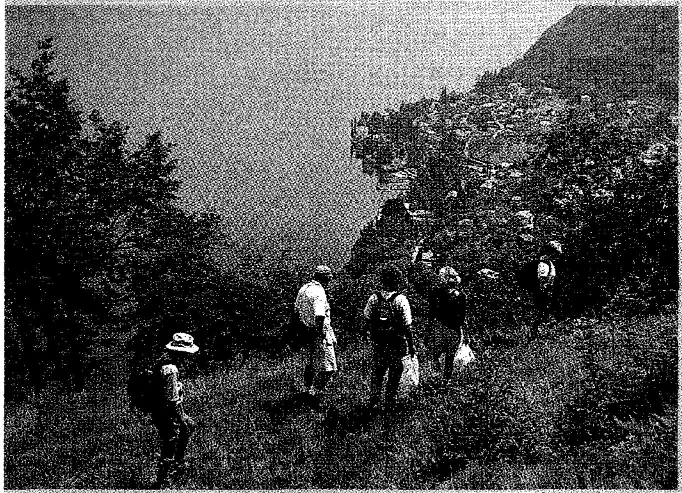

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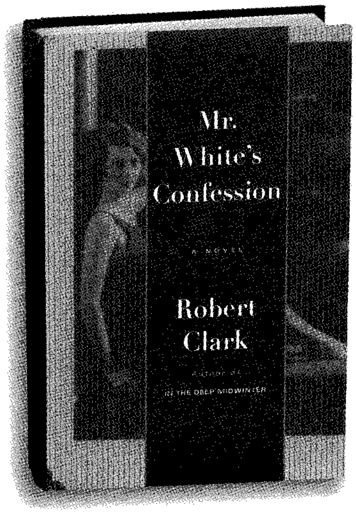

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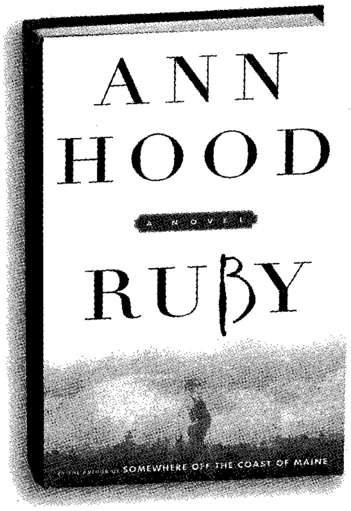

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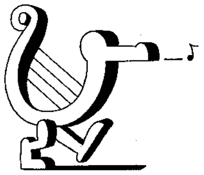
figures. And, as far as ‘music’ is concerned, the Ultraverse in its entirety has failed to advance on a few variations on ‘Chopsticks.’ Plus the odd battle hymn. Or battle chant. Oh yeah. The other thing that slowed you down was the unique diffuseness of your emotional range. Tender feelings for each other, and for children and even animals.

“I like art now. It takes a while to get the hang of it. What you’ve got to do is tell yourself, ‘This won’t actually get me anywhere,’ and then you don’t have a problem. It’s strange. Your scientists had no idea what to look for or where to look for it, but your poets, I sometimes felt, divined the universal. . . . Forgive me: my immersion in your story, particularly over these last ten thousand years, while often poisoned by an unavoidable—an obligatory—contempt, has caused me to . . . Why do I say that: ‘Forgive me’?”

And indeed the force field propagating from the janitor on Mars seemed to weaken: the metal he was made of had lost the sheen of the merely metallic. His dropped, pronged head was briefly babyish in its curve.

“Tell me something, O DNA. Human beings, go ahead, disabuse the janitor on Mars. I have this counterintuitive theory. I can tell it’s bullshit, but I can’t get it out of my head. It goes like this: Now, I know I’m halfway there on religion. Surely this has to be how it is. It’s like a tapestry sopping with blood, right? You had to do it that way: for the art. But tell me. Tell me. Does it go further? Like Guernica happened so Picasso could paint it. No Beethoven without Bonaparte. The First World War was staged for Wilfred Owen, among others. The events in Germany and Poland in the early nineteen-forties were set in motion for Primo Levi and Paul Celan. Et cetera. But I’m already getting the feeling it isn’t like that. It isn’t like that, is it, Miss World?”



“No, sir,” said Miss World. “It isn’t like that.”

“I didn’t really think so. Well, in a way,” said the janitor on Mars, interestedly, “this makes my last chore easier. I’m glad we met. You know, it took me the longest time to get the hang of the way you people do things. You always had to do it at your own speed. A torment to watch, but that was your way. And whenever I tried to soup things up it was usually a total dud.”

“Sir? Excuse me?” This was Incarnacion Buttruguena-Hume. “Are you saying you influenced events on Earth?”

“Yeah. I used to try and liven things up every now and then. For example, take this gentleman Aristarchus. Almost exactly twenty-three centuries ago, there’s this Greek gentleman working on the brightness fluctuations of the planets. I put it to him that—”

“You put it to him?”

“Yes. On the neural radio. When your scientists talk about their great moments of revelation—a feeling of pleasant vacuity followed by a ream of math—they’re usually describing a telepathic assist from Mars. This Aristarchus happens on a coherent heliocentric system. He spreads the word around the land. And what happens? Ptolemy. Christianity. You weren’t *ready*. So we all had to sit and wait two thousand years for Copernicus. Stuff like that happened all the time.”

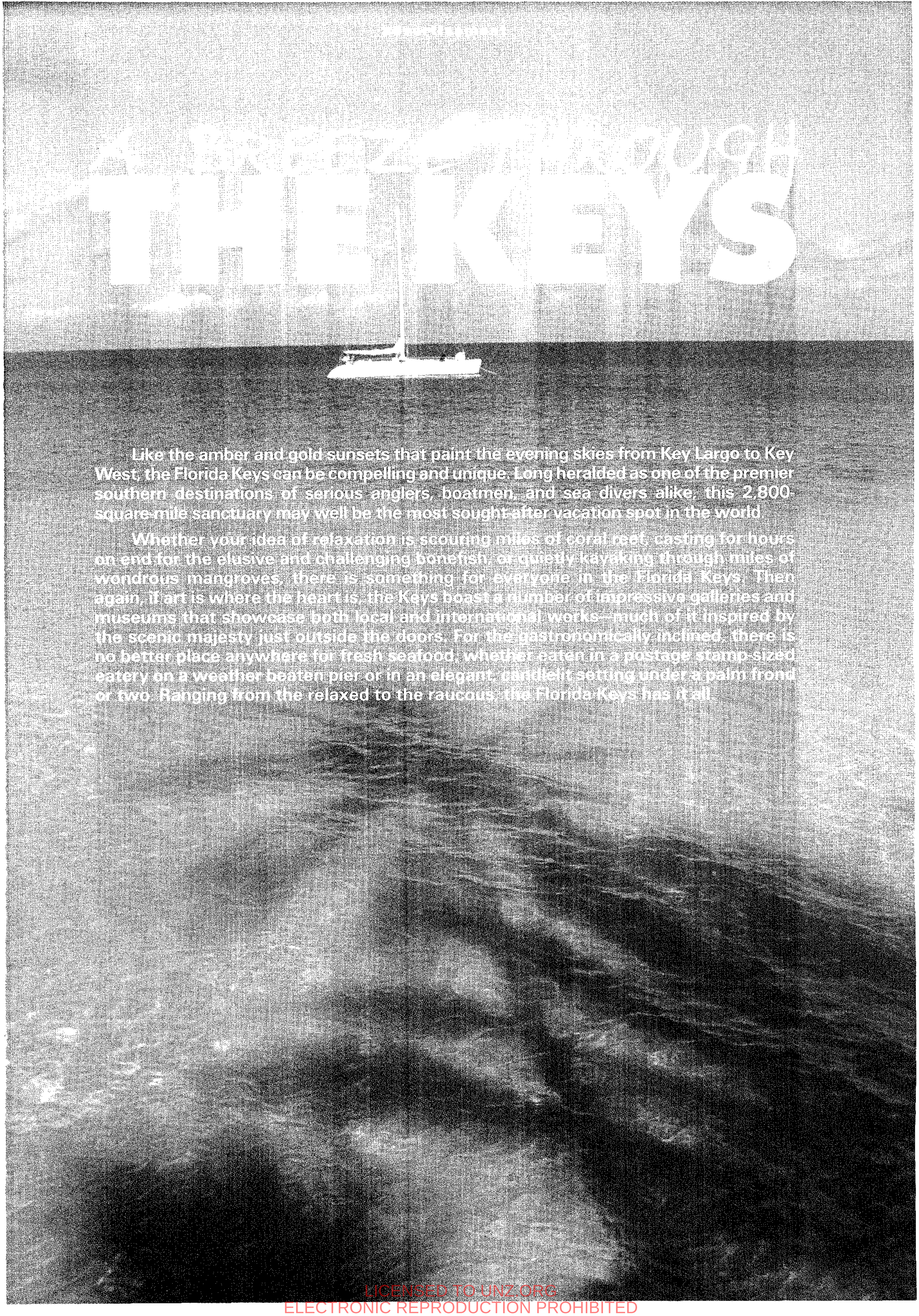
Murmurs died in the dark chill. Pioline (solar neutrino count) gave an emphatic and breathy moan that had in it elements of anger but far more predominantly elements of grief. As the silence settled, the janitor on Mars gave a light jolt of puzzlement and said, “You’re uncomfortable with that? Come on. That’s the least of it. Welcome to Middenworld. Any last questions?”

“Just what the hell is this trip-wire thing?”

“Again, part of the program. Contact with Earth could not be established until you went and tripped that wire. Which you did on September 30th: the day I buzzed Incarnacion here.”

“What was it about September 30th?” asked Montgomery Gruber (geophysiology). “We looked into it and nothing happened.”

“You mean you looked into it and you *think* nothing happened. Plenty happened. Some asshole of an otter or a beaver sealed off a minor tributary of the Snake River in Washington State. . . . Along certain latitudes a critical fraction of microbial life committed itself to significant changes in its respiratory metabolism. . . . The forty-seven billionth self-cooling cola can burped out its hydrocarbons. . . . And there was that mild forest fire in Albania. And there you have it. You wouldn’t know how these things are connected, but connected they are. All this against a background of mobilized phosphorus, carbon burial, and hydrogen escape. The



A BREEZE THROUGH THE KEYS

Like the amber and gold sunsets that paint the evening skies from Key Largo to Key West, the Florida Keys can be compelling and unique. Long heralded as one of the premier southern destinations of serious anglers, boatmen, and sea divers alike, this 2,800-square-mile sanctuary may well be the most sought-after vacation spot in the world.

Whether your idea of relaxation is scouring miles of coral reef, casting for hours on end for the elusive and challenging bonefish, or quietly kayaking through miles of wondrous mangroves, there is something for everyone in the Florida Keys. Then again, if art is where the heart is, the Keys boast a number of impressive galleries and museums that showcase both local and international works—much of it inspired by the scenic majesty just outside the doors. For the gastronomically inclined, there is no better place anywhere for fresh seafood, whether eaten in a postage stamp-sized eatery on a weather beaten pier or in an elegant, candlelit setting under a palm frond or two. Ranging from the relaxed to the raucous, the Florida Keys has it all.

SCUBA CULTURE

Perhaps the most romantic image of Florida is embodied in Key Largo, site of the movie of the same name starring Humphrey Bogart. Apart from a number of interesting, out-of-the-way restaurants, Key Largo is worth visiting for the new Gallery at Kona Kai (800-365-7829), the resort where the work of local and national artists and photographers is on display.

Key Largo is acknowledged to be the scuba diving capital of the world. Myriad instructional dive centers, from Captain Slate's Atlantis Divers (800-331-3483) to Conch Republic Watersports (305-451-1770), await those seeking to soak up the scenery down below. Should underwater photography rock your boat, Steven Frink's Photographic (305-451-3737) holds two-day private and semi-private classes that include equipment and time spent at the favorite reefs of photo pro Mike Waters, who teaches the course.

THE COLOR PURPLE

Those familiar with the thrilling sport of bonefishing recognize Islamorada (Spanish for "purple isles") on upper Matecumbe Key as the spot where this challenging sport was invented. It was memorialized in print by Zane Grey, one of the first to ever fly cast for a bonefish in these tranquil waters. Patience is a necessary virtue of the bonefisherman and taking the time for instruction is always a good idea for the novice. The best tutoring is offered by Sandy Moret's nearby Florida Keys Fly Fishing School and Outfitters (305-664-5423) where some of the region's two hundred guides accompany novices on fly fishing trips in the flats of Islamorada. Not to be missed in this part of the Keys is the World Wide Sportsman (305-664-4615), a complex with a replica of Ernest Hemingway's boat, Pilar, as well as nautical-inspired art galleries, aquariums, and a marina.

For elegant lodging and dining, the Cheeca Lodge, spread over twenty-seven oceanfront acres, is a longtime favorite of President George Bush and a Seinfeld cast member or two. Less expensive is the kitschy Chesapeake Resort a mile or two north. And don't miss stopping by the Lor-e-lei cabana bar for a Cuba Libre and the sunset.

KEY TO THE PAST

Marathon, known as the "heart of the Keys," is home to a newly refurbished and expanded airport, the Museum of Natural History (305-743-9100), and the Dolphin Research Center on Grassy Key, which is a focal point for worldwide education on the dolphin. From November 27th-29th, look for the Marathon Small Boat Billfish Tournament, and from November 29th-December 1st, the Marathon Sailfish Classic will be underway.

Photos: *cover* Saki Sakakibara/Photonica; Steven Frink Photography/WaterHouse and Monroe County Tourism

CALL OF THE WILD

South of Marathon and Islamorada are the Lower Keys, which comprise the popular Looe Key reef (site of great coral formations and the remains of the H.M.S. Looe, which sunk in 1744) and Big Pine Key. Here, sandy beaches allow for great snorkeling and beachcombing, while inland, nature and wilderness trails beckon wildlife enthusiasts, bird watchers, serious hikers, and wide-eyed walkers. The Fred Manillo and Watson Nature Trails, not far from the celebrated Blue Hole freshwater quarry on Big Pine Key, are part of the National Key Deer Refuge (305-872-2239). The refuge offers enchanting and informative geological tours through the lush foliage and fauna indigenous to the area. Big Pine Key is also the home of Artists in Paradise (305-872-1828), a cooperative gallery founded by artists living and working exclusively in Key West.

BOHEMIAN LANDSCAPE

A mecca of hedonism rich in American history, folklore, and culture, Key West is truly one of the most magical spots in the Sunshine State. Pastel painted luxury resorts adorn its inland waterways, and throughout the charming town and outlying neighborhoods there are cozy bed and breakfasts ranging in size and style from Victorian manor houses to quaint sea shanties lovingly restored with modern amenities and furnishings.

Nightlife in Key West tends to be exciting, colorful, and imaginative. Scheduled throughout the fall and early winter months are various street fairs, parades, world championship offshore boat races, house and garden tours, and a Christmas parade. For those who want to rise above it all, parasailing classes are offered at Atlantic Fury Catamarans (800-994-8898). For those who want to fathom the depths, schedule the perfect dive or snorkel trip at Southpoint Divers on Duval Street (800-891-DIVE). For those who want to party and forget it all, there are too many places to mention, although if you don't hit Sloppy Joe's or Captain Tony's, you really didn't go to Key West.

For more information on The Florida Keys, call 800-FLA-KEYS, or visit our website at www.fla-keys.com

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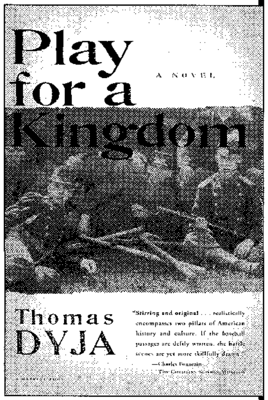

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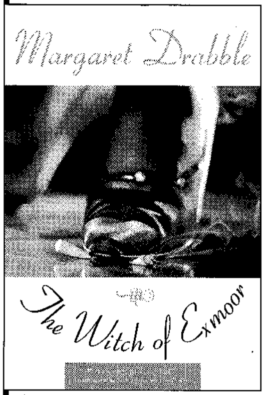

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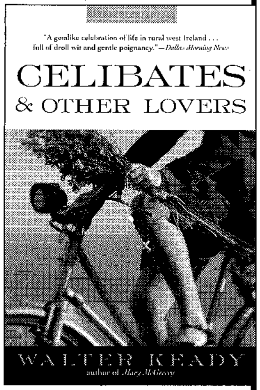

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"Meaning?"

"Meaning the amount of oxygen in your atmosphere is starting to climb. At last irreversibly. It won't feel any different for a while. But by the end of the sixties it'll hit twenty-seven per cent and keep going. Yes, I know: a pity about that."

Incarnacion and Miss World turned to each other sharply. Because the scientists were now shouting out, gesturing, interjecting. Miss World said, "Please, sir. I don't understand."

"Well. It means you'll have to be very, very careful with your heat sources, Miss World. It'll reach such a concentration that to light a cigarette and throw a match over your shoulder would spark a holocaust. It's all a great shame, because this is the kind of problem that's easy to fix if you catch it early on. In the coming years, you'll have to work awful hard on volcano-capping and storm control. To no avail, alas. Here's another thing. It seems, anyway, that the solar system is shutting down. There's a planetesimal out there with your name written on it. An asteroid the size of Greenland is due to ground-zero on the Iberian Peninsula in the unseasonably torrid summer of 2069. At ninety miles a second. Now. There might have been a window of a couple of days or so at the beginning of the decade: you could have duplicated your feat of 2037 when you saw off Spielberg-Robb. But the thing is, you'll need your nuclear weapons this time. A mass driver won't do the trick, not with the English this asteroid's got on it. Unfortunately, though, there's now a tritium hitch with your nukes that you'd have needed to start work on much earlier to have any hope of rearming them in time. Obviously a body this size moving at twenty-seven times the speed of sound will have considerable kinetic energy to be released as heat. And it'll rip through the mantle and the crust, disgorging trillions of tons of magma. It's all very unfortunate. Mars itself may be lightly damaged in the blast."

Voronezh said, "That was the trip wire? You're saying you couldn't act until it was already too late to make any difference?"

"Affirmative. That was the lock."

"Sir?" asked Miss World. "I'm sorry, sir, but there's something I have to say. I think you're a despicable person."

"Negatory. I'm not a person, lady. I'm a machine obeying a program."

Voronezh got to his feet. So did the janitor on Mars, who leaned forward and cocked his beak at him.

"Then God curse whoever put you together."

"Oh, come on. What did you expect? This is *Mars*, pal," said the janitor as the lights began to fade. "The Red One. You hear that? Nergal: Star of Death. Now get the hell out. Yeah. Go. Walk out of here with your eyes on the fucking floor. Exit through the left hall. Follow the goddam signs."

POP JONES slipped into the Conservatory and opened the back door. Dusk was coming. Across the lawn were the lit windows of the Common Room (he could see Kidd and Davidge, staring out). The children wouldn't return from the beach for another hour. Later, after they'd been fed, Pop Jones would make his rounds with his bucket and his keys. Make his rounds? Pop shrugged, then nodded. Yes, it would be important to try to go on just as before. But could you do that?

The star was dropping over the steep green. Starset! Stardown! And already a generous, a forgiving moon; it carved a penumbra of golden grime in the cirrus, and the face saying, I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.

Pop Jones turned.

"Floor."

"Timmy?"

He could see the moisture in the child's eyes.

"Timmy, Timmy. Who did this to you, Timmy?"

At one remove, it seemed, Pop Jones felt astonishment gathering in him. How entirely different his own voice sounded: thick, mechanical. In this new time, when he, in common with everyone else on Earth, was submitting to an obscure and yet disgustingly luminous reaffiliation, Pop Jones found that thing in himself that had never been there before: the necessary species of self-love.

"Day," said Timmy clearly. And he said it again, quite clearly, like an English teacher. "Day... Day done it."

Darkness increased its hold on the room of glass. Pop Jones's new voice said that night was now coming. He moved toward the boy. Hush there. Hush. ♦

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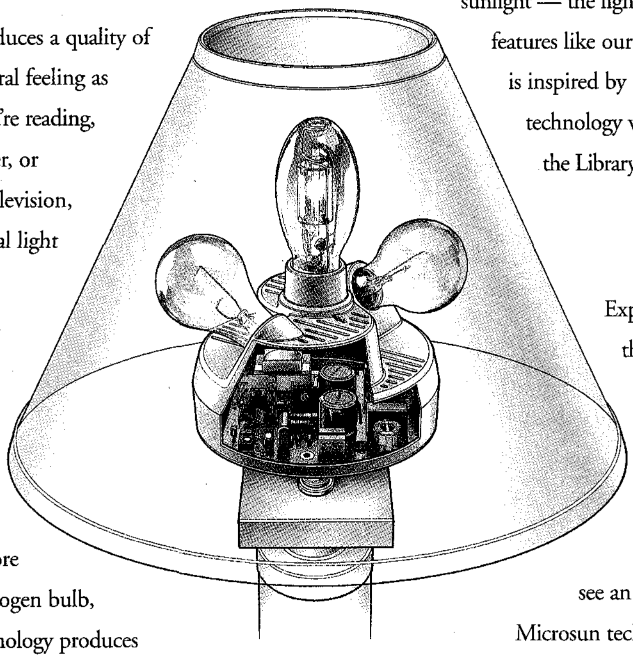

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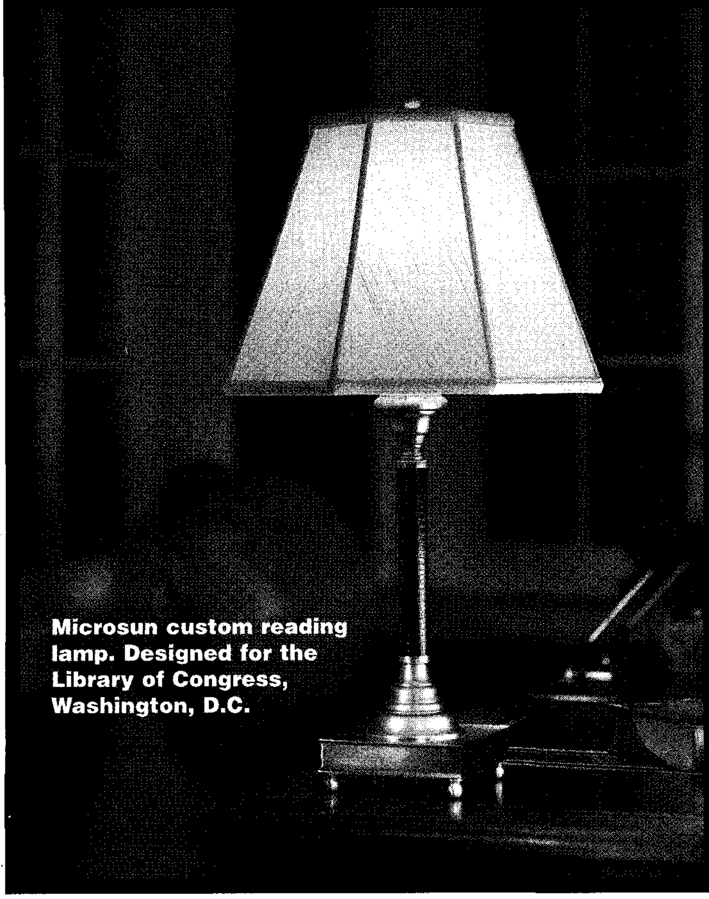

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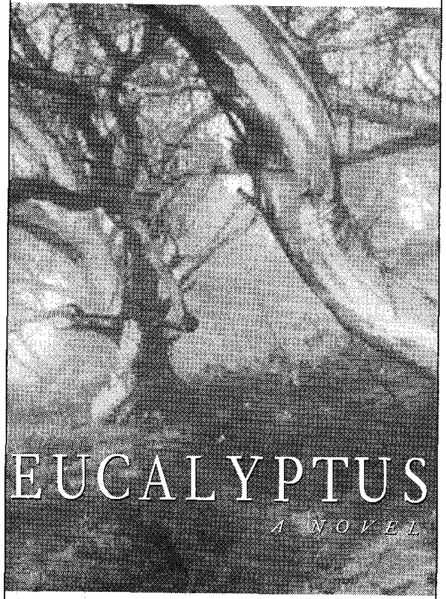

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FARRAR STRAUS GIROUX

A CRITIC AT LARGE

NO RESPECT

Is the future of black soul music in the hands of a white British woman?

BY HILTON ALS

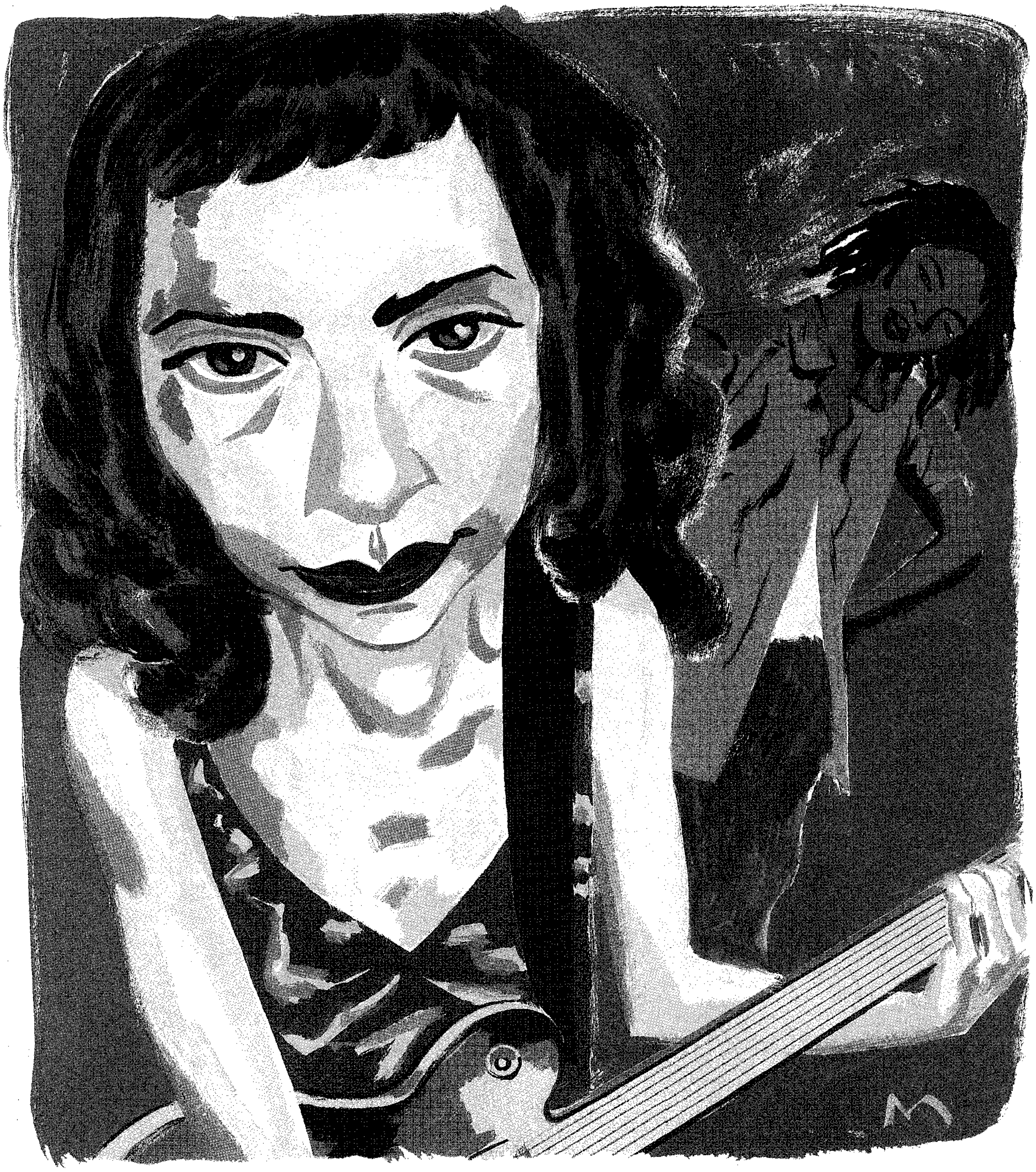
I WOULDN’T have thought much about any of this had I not caught the Grammy Award-winning pop star Beck presenting the award for Best Rap Video on MTV’s 1998 Video Music Awards. Beck can best be described as a soft-rock musician with a conceptual-art pedigree. His *branché* cool stems not from his doing anything as old-fashioned as playing a musical instrument but from his ability to synthesize computer-generated sounds that play like bright commercial jingles. Some people think Beck has an original image and something to say. His white male college-student fans try to imitate his flat affect—his stridently “ironic” conversational tone—as well as his arresting fashion sense: the slick pimp suits, cowboy hats, and wraparound sunglasses that are the earmarks of his style.

It’s a style that has been deeply influenced by that of black American musicians. At the MTV Video Music Awards, though, Beck seemed to be doing his—perhaps “ironic”—best to trash the culture that inspired his hip persona. He took the stage at the same time as the singer Tori Amos, his co-presenter, but upstaged her almost immediately. Parodying the great James Brown’s stage moves, he tossed off his light-gray suit jacket and began to dance in a contrived, funky way that seemed calculated to call attention to his appropriated blackness. Then, as Amos prepared to announce the winner, Beck whipped out two cell phones. Holding one to each ear, he mock-talked into them simultaneously, as if he were describing the glam goings on around him to a couple of brothers stuck back in the hood.

Beck’s performance could be considered a sendup of a dopey crossover rap star—Will Smith, say—but to me his assumption that it was O.K. to parody a certain fraction of black culture because he felt a part of it just didn’t seem, as Mammy says in the film version of “Gone with the Wind,” “fittin’.” This graceless performance served only to reinforce Beck’s obdurate whiteness. It reminded me of a similar story about the all-white hip-hop band the Beastie Boys. In an oral history of their career, the rapper Dr. Dre talks about a concert they gave at the Apollo Theatre, in Harlem. At some point during the show, one of the Boys called out, “All you niggers wave your hands in the air!” (“I’ve never seen so many blank stares,” Dre comments.)

While Beck and many of his musical peers—artists ranging from the Beastie Boys to the Backstreet Boys—have borrowed extensively from black music and style, they don’t seem to have much understanding of their position in a tradition that goes beyond ripping off James Brown choreography or sampling his records. And the one aspect of traditional soul music that they haven’t tried to reproduce is its surfeit of emotional discipline. In “Why Do Fools Fall in Love,” a bio-pic about one of the first black crossover stars, the singer Frankie Lymon, Little Richard gives an outstanding performance as himself. “They took my music and made money off it, made it into rock and roll!” he exclaims in one scene. “Now it’s *my* time. I want to get paid!” This culture of not getting paid but being a class act anyway, of smiling through disappointment—which still plays a role in black Americans’ real life—has made little mark on the majority of new pop albums, perhaps because today’s music industry is unable to market that sort of emotional complexity.

Instead, it supports a kind of reduced soul and artists who are ghostly versions of former stars. It is possible to see in Mariah Carey one of the original Supremes—the “difficult” Flo Ballard, if Flo had lost a little weight and taken her lessons at the Motown Charm School seriously. And singer Maxwell’s nearly inaudible love vibrations come off as a



Polly Jean Harvey may make a better soul-music diva for the new age than Lauryn Hill.

DAVID MAZZUCCHELLI

safer, cleaned-up version of Al Green's painful projections of desire. Yet when Carey, Maxwell, Beck, and others take to the stage to perform their idea of blackness, it looks odd on them, almost farcical—like children playing a dangerous game of dress-up.

I GREW up in a black community in Brooklyn, and went to a predominantly white, progressive high school in Manhattan, in the mid-seventies. Before starting high school, I had had some exposure to white people, but not much. At the parties my new classmates threw in their parents' grand apartments overlooking Central Park West or on the Upper East Side, I discovered that they did not like the kind of dance music that was then popular with blacks—Chic or Labelle. Instead, they listened to nostalgic funk from the nineteen-sixties—presumably because it was more "authentic" or raw. Or perhaps my classmates' choice in music was an illustration of something else: if they could consign blackness to the past—by listening only to the black music that had crossed over successfully in the sixties, and which employed the by then unthreatening vocabulary of counterculture ("Psychedelic shack! That's where it's at!")—then they didn't need to know about the expanding new black culture and the world it reflected.

Any Temptations record was guaranteed to fill the dance floor at those parties. So was anything by James Brown. When my classmates danced to Brown's "Say It Loud—I'm Black and I'm Proud," they'd stick out their lower lips and their asses, lock their knees, and strut like Mick Jagger—who had not only legitimated black music for white audiences but also made it acceptable for whites to dance to black music. Though I didn't dare tell them so, I doubted whether James Brown had ever envisioned a circle of towheaded white boys with their arms around each other's

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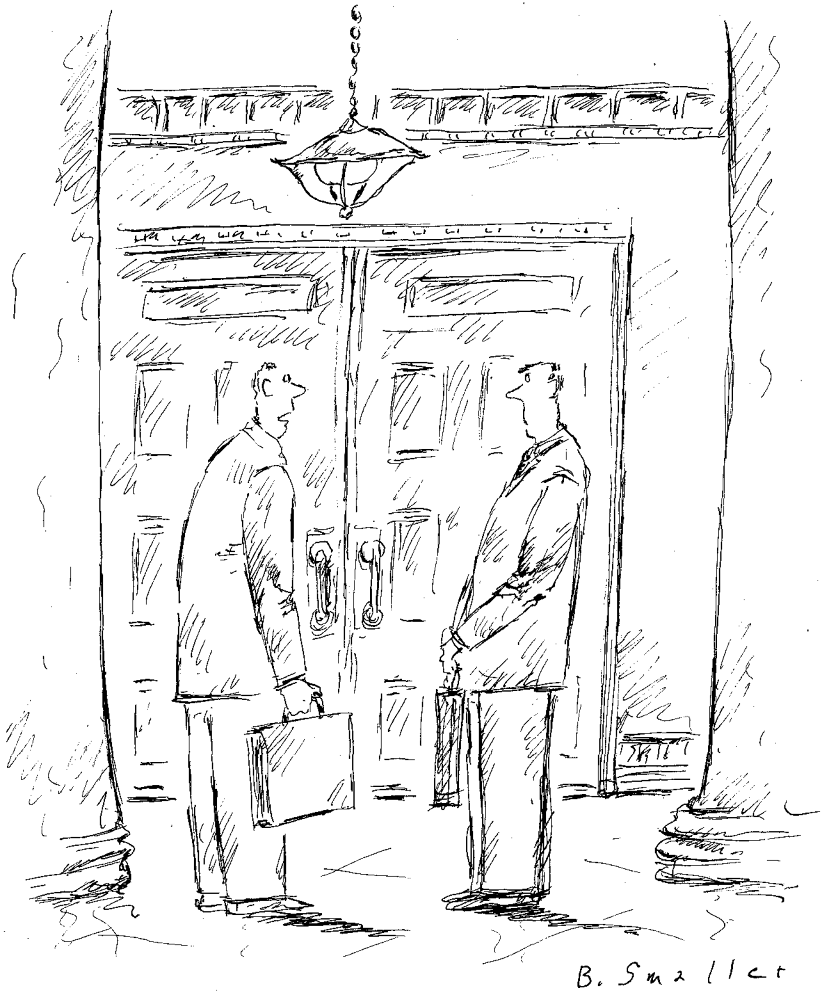
shoulders, kicking, Rockettes-style, to "The Ghetto." No amount of observation could make me understand the way they danced. Their bodies didn't seem to connect to the music. It was as if they wanted to control it—to make its rhythm conform to theirs. I don't think I would have minded those parties so much had I not so often been asked at some point during the evening to lead a "Soul Train"-like dance line. The color of my skin made me an "expert" on inner-city dance moves, and for a while I was the Alvin Ailey of those Upper East Side drawing rooms.

Back then, I didn't understand the effect that black music had on white Americans who responded to its pathos and funk, to its humor and irony, with an attempt to control it, either through parody or dismissal. Black music demands a lot of its audience: it requires direct communication, a kind of call and response. It is also the music of the underclass and therefore politically troublesome. "It was Bessie Smith, through her tone and cadence, who helped . . . reconcile me to being a 'nigger,'" James Baldwin wrote in his essay "The Discovery of What It Means to Be an American." And it is that feeling of not being part of the status quo—of being something as reviled and loaded as a "nigger" and flaunting it—that has been black music's primary narrative since performers like Fats Waller crooned, "What did I do to be so black and blue," more than sixty years ago.

Indeed, it is this drama of disenfranchisement that attracts white suburban kids to black music now more than ever—their need to adopt and hence control the ethnicity that their parents or grandparents fled the cities to avoid. What those kids want is to experience The Real. What placid front-lawned (or even Upper East Side) reality can compete with the fantasy of being a powerful player in a cool black world?

WHENEVER I danced, at those high-school parties and for a long time afterward, I kept my movements small and close to myself. I tried not to dance black. I couldn't be oblivious or get



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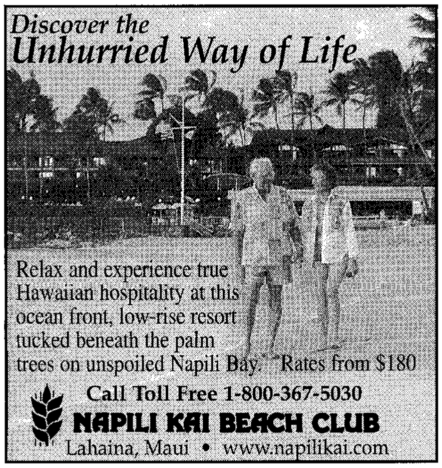

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lost in the music. Instead, I relied on what the Southern Catholic writer Flannery O'Connor described as the black man's "very elaborate manners and great formality which he uses superbly for his own protection and to insure his own privacy."

Such "very elaborate manners and great formality" are precisely what's missing from most soul music produced these days. They are what kept it always only almost decipherable, mysterious, a charming but frustratingly fleeting glimpse into a complex culture: trios of girls in chiffon; men with marcelled hair dancing in syncopation. The style that black soul singers promoted had a glamorous, standoffish quality, the pop hauteur of Dionne Warwick's "Don't Make Me Over" or Billie Holiday's near-Brechtian distancing techniques. (In "Sleepless Nights" Elizabeth Hardwick described Holiday's white audiences: "Infatuated glances saying, Beautiful black star, can you love me? The answer: No.") No black performer who became popular during soul's heyday, in the early nineteen-sixties, when Motown Records instigated the new urban sound, would have dreamed of showing his or her true self to a largely white audience. It would have meant selling out, and no self-respecting performer actually wanted to be Sammy Davis, Jr.—not even Sammy Davis, Jr.

But, in the middle to late sixties, the industry began to change, largely because of the Beatles' sustained success (in those days, any musician got more airplay if he could sing about at least one tangerine dream) and the popularization of youthful rebellion and leftist politics. Soul music was out of synch with this way of being, and its discretion was wiped away in favor of more groovy and accessible pop. Darlene Love's rough-edged, hard-earned style of singing became less popular than Tina Turner's rock-influenced wall of sound. The complexity of the Crystals' "He Hit Me (It Felt Like a Kiss)" was passé compared with the straightforward fun of songs like Ronnie Spector's "Tandoori Chicken."

There was one interesting exception to this shift: Aretha Franklin. Since she started recording, more than forty years ago, Franklin's sound has been linked to gospel. Her hits are not gospel-influenced pop tunes but, rather, gospel songs with pop subject matter—a distinction that Franklin made clear through what the critic Ann Powers calls her "celebrated use of melisma

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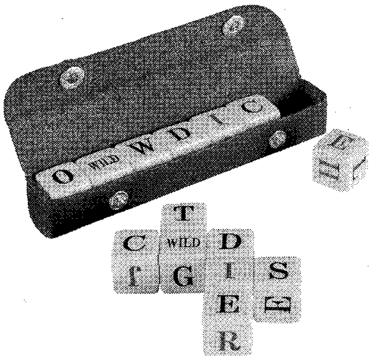

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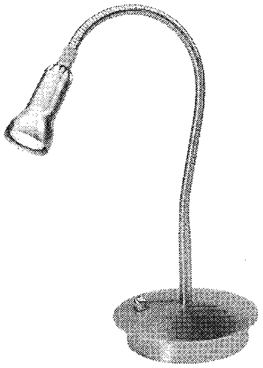

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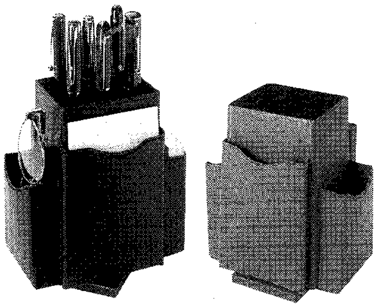

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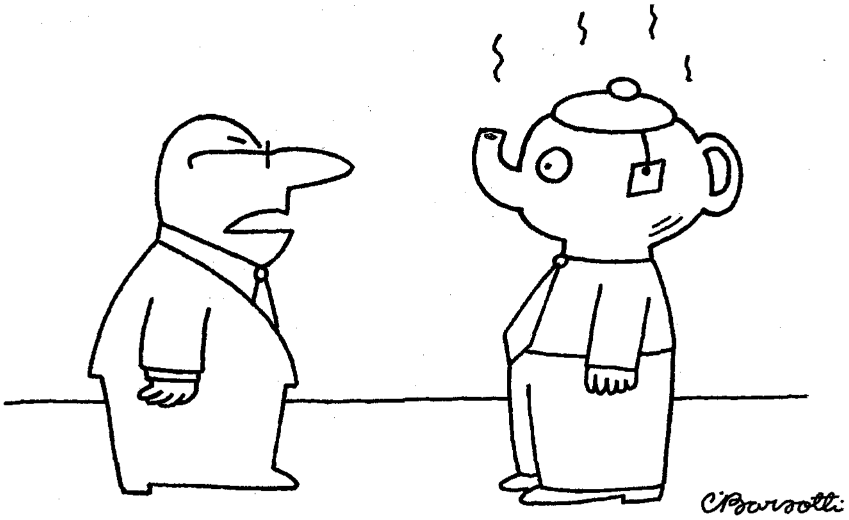

"Well, make yourself useful while you're steeping."

(stringing together a series of notes in a single syllable) and 'squalling' (bursting unexpectedly into those divine high notes)." Franklin was recognizably church, and she knew how to work the congregation. Her big black sound appealed to whites because it was easy to grasp; she sounded just the way white people imagined a black woman would sound—plaintive but feisty, indomitable but sad. Franklin never really had to cross over, because whites were willing to follow her into her manufactured, impersonal form of blackness—a safe place where no one got cut up after a rowdy fish fry. And, of course, she looked the part. Whether she was sporting marabou feathers and a beehive or, later, a dashiki dress and a turban, she remained a backwoods mama tarted up for big-city doings.

While I was growing up, I didn't know one black person who bought Aretha Franklin's records. But, largely through the homogenization of all those who came after her and now stand behind Janet Jackson's "Velvet Rope," Franklin has managed to survive as soul music's authentic black voice. On VH1's recent special "Divas Live," a celebration of the singers Mariah Carey, Gloria Estefan, and Shania Twain, among others, Franklin appeared as the ultimate diva, whom all aspired to emulate. Yet, onstage, she mostly ignored the girls with big hair who were there to canonize her, and she used her de rigueur performance of "You Make Me Feel Like (A Natural Woman)" as a platform to outvocalize them. Over the years, Franklin has become a lazy singer and an even worse performer. She may scat around "Chain of Fools," but she no longer really sings. Her fans don't seem to mind. What they are most interested in—what they feed on—is her aura of monolithic blackness.

While other black singers' integrity lay in making discreet use of their private tragedies, I never heard Franklin give up anything of herself. She was not nearly as confusing to white audiences as Nina Simone, for example. Unlike Franklin, who was the daughter of a prominent minister, Simone came up on her own, and her voice was the voice of adversity. Born into a family of eight in the South, in 1933, she studied classical piano at Juilliard, then supported herself in the jazz clubs of New York in the fifties. Although she was able to sing songs that related to the counterculture, her crossover success was compromised by her strange and shocking diction (in the outspoken songs she wrote, like the civil-rights ballad "Mississippi Goddam") and by her tendency to complain—about her audiences, about her bad treatment by managers, about white people who ripped her off. "I didn't fit into white ideas of what a black performer should be," she wrote in her autobiography. Where Franklin made her brand of soul music accessible to anyone, Simone told white people a thing or two, then shut them out.

As a child, I was introduced to black popular music largely by my older sister. She listened not only to Nina Simone but also to the late, great white soul singer Laura Nyro, to Angela Bofill, and to Joni Mitchell. In short, my sister's take on music was largely integrationist and feminist. For her, soul was not limited by race, even though it grew out of black music. Rather, what she focussed on was the singer's voice, and the blues-based guitar or stride piano supporting it. And the way she identified each of those singers as "black" taught me a new definition of the word—one that had little to do with skin color.

One of the reasons my sister and I could call certain white singers black was that they identified themselves as such in their music—in their tone and cadence and subject matter. Last year, around the time the songwriter Rickie Lee Jones's gorgeous album "Ghostyhead" came out, I told Jones that she had been one of those singers. Her face took on a look of apprehension and curiosity, but she didn't explain how my confession had affected her until we began discussing Laura Nyro. "I graduated from grade school during the riots in Chicago," Jones told me. "I was the subject of terrible racial brutality, and never for a moment did I consider a Black Panther my brother. When Nyro sang that line, 'Black Panther is your brother,' it mended it, and all the people she spoke about were bonded to me." Recently Howie Klein, who records Joni Mitchell on his label, Reprise Records, told me that Mitchell had always felt that her music belonged on black radio. (The first line of Mitchell's proposed autobiography reads, "I was the only black man at the party.")

Where Beck uses black music to feed his sense of hipness and adolescent rebellion, Mitchell, Nyro, Jones, and others recognize in it their own identification as emotionally and politically disenfranchised people.

THE title song of Aretha Franklin's latest album, "A Rose Is Still a Rose," was written by the twenty-three-year-old black rapper-songwriter Lauryn Hill and is full of the kind of spiritual uplift that Hill publicized as a third of the enormously popular trio the Fugees. Hill released her first solo album, "The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill," last August, and it has already gone double platinum.

Where Franklin was hailed as the Queen of Soul, Hill has been anointed the new Queen of Hip-Hop. *Newsweek* and *Time* have run stories about her, and *Entertainment Weekly* put her on its cover. Like Franklin, Hill is a child of

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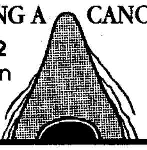
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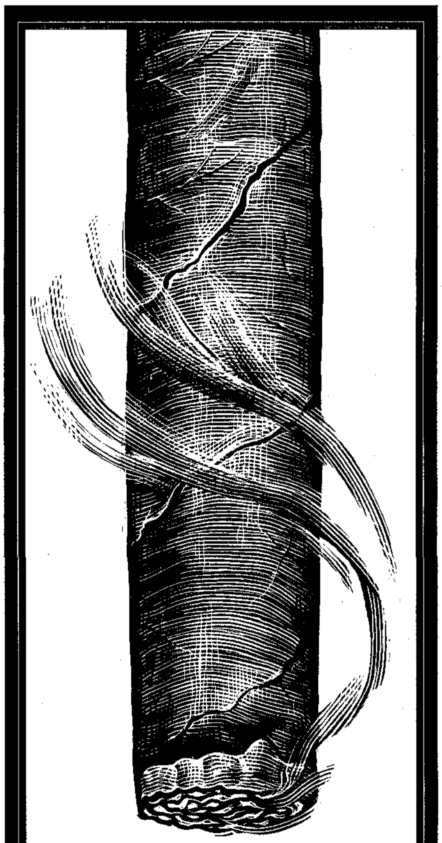
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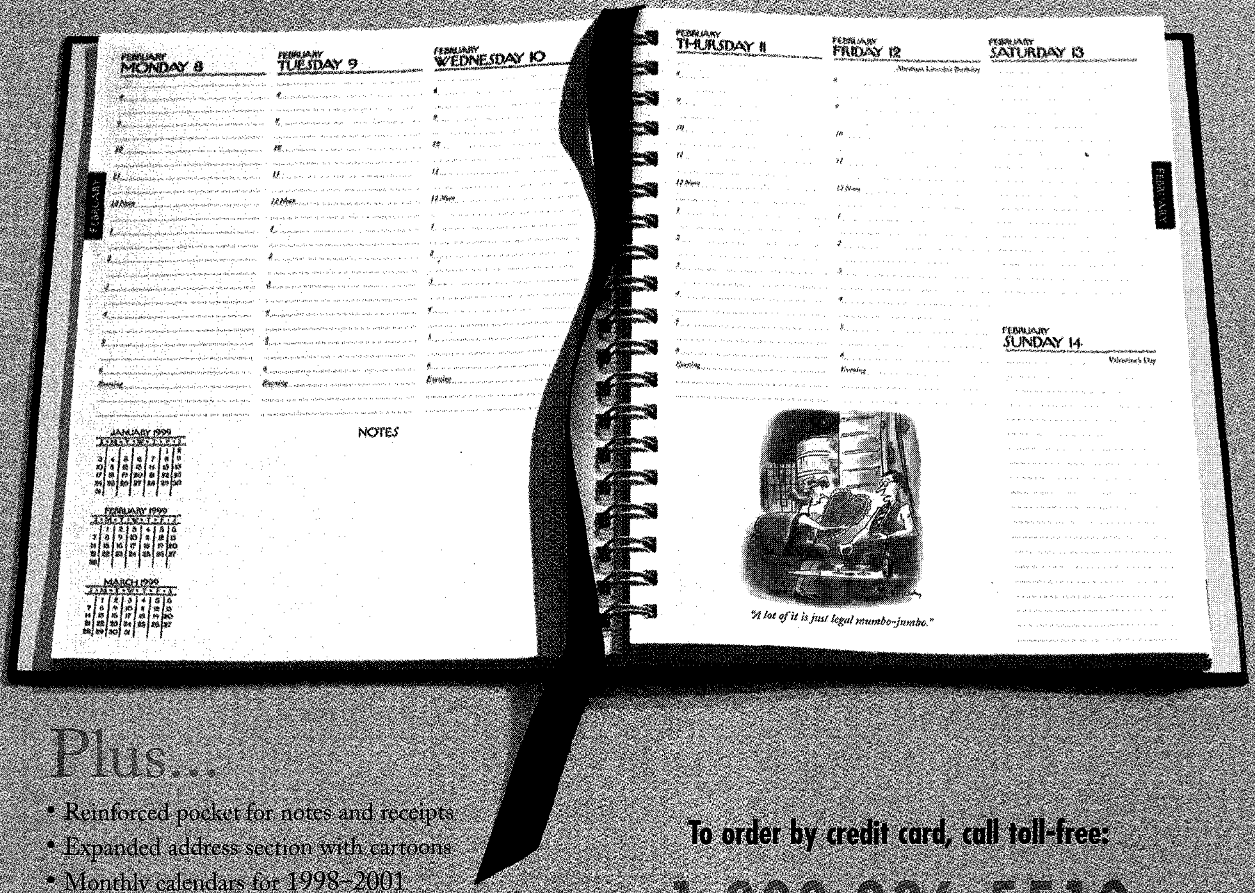
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the middle class, who was encouraged in her career by supportive parents. But although she grew up in New Jersey and attended Columbia University, where she majored in history, most reporters present her as a down-home, folksy kind of character—an Aretha for the new millennium. It's a blurring of fact that Hill herself encourages.

Some of the tracks on "Miseducation" are introduced by a young male schoolteacher's voice asking a class of presumably inner-city kids such weighty questions as "How many of you have ever been in love?" When the teacher calls out Hill's name, she is absent—presumably because she's out on the streets, learning life's real lessons. The structure of the album reminds me of Toni Morrison's first two books—"The Bluest Eye" and "Sula"—whose evocations of colored people living through everyday dramas have the quiet lyricism of shafts of light seen underwater. Unfortunately, Hill is a less reliable narrator than Morrison. She speaks from a blacker-than-thou stance that feels contrived, and there is something cold and calculated in her expressions of love for her people—which are not unlike Al Sharpton's. (She has a habit of referring to the black race as "we"—in the same way that Muslims called the blacks in my neighborhood "brother" and "sister" in the seventies.) And her ideology, which depicts blacks as the chosen people seeking an Israel that is closed to whites—one long-standing false rumor has Hill saying that she'd rather see her children starve than have a white person buy her album—seems shallowly reasoned, as unsatisfying an approach to life's problems as Franklin's Soul-Mama Solution: a little lovin' goes a long way.

Hill's "To Zion," a song about her son, is a hymn glorifying the sacrifices of black motherhood. ("'Look at your career,' they said, 'Lauryn, baby use your head.' But instead I chose to use my heart," she sings.) The song is perhaps unintentionally reminiscent of Diana Ross and the Supremes' "Love Child"—a ballad about the unhappy life of an illegitimate child in the ghetto. But Hill's version of blackness—at least, the version she promotes on "Miseducation"—feels distinctly middle-class. It is as if she'd learned the rhetoric of persecution without actually knowing what it is to live it. And, while she slathers "Miseducation" with heavy doses of liberal guilt, it's white kids hoping to brush up against The Real who are buying it—unaware that it's the project of a corporate-minded single mom, geared more toward the airwaves than toward anyone's soul.

MANY people believe that Hill represents the future of soul music. But if there's anyone among her contemporaries who can legitimately claim to be the soul-music diva for the new age, it's the white British singer PJ Harvey, whose remarkable fifth album—"Is This Desire?"—delivers on the promise of her less commercially successful previous albums.

Polly Jean Harvey is the twenty-nine-year-old daughter of liberal-minded parents, who, she told me recently, "played Howlin' Wolf and Captain Beefheart all the time when I was growing up." By the time she was twenty-one, she had formed a band of her own in Yeovil, her home town in southwestern England, and had begun to develop her distinctive sound—one that harnesses the power of traditional blues guitar and is as uncompromisingly odd as Nina Simone's. Still, Harvey remained ambivalent about performance—about being seen at all. "I always thought I was hideously ugly, actually," she said. Harvey, whose black hair frames a long, thin, and arresting face, has an almost distorted look: her face is bigger than it needs to be, while her body is barely there at all.

Since the early nineties, Harvey has fought off her physical shyness with powerful songs, which rival Nina Simone's in the force of their anger and wit. Harvey is scarily funny and scarily menacing, and her lyrics are a form of revenge for her feelings of undesirability and rage. Her humor has dried blood in it. In "Legs," a song on her second album, "4-Track Demos," she intones, "I might as well be dead, but I could kill you instead." Harvey's best works on her new album—the dour songs "Catherine" and "The Garden"—are extraordinarily evocative. In them, no exchange—whether person to person, or nature to man—is without metaphysical thorniness. And no one, in Harvey's songs, gets away with just being in or out of love: one's emotional life is a real killer.

Harvey's desperate contortions of despair identify her as a member of an underclass of one. And her obsession with the heavy carnage of existence says more about the soul than any contemporary music based on imitation. Harvey protects the privacy of soul while wearing its black heart on her sleeve. ♦

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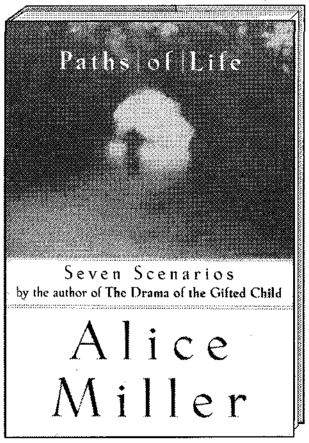

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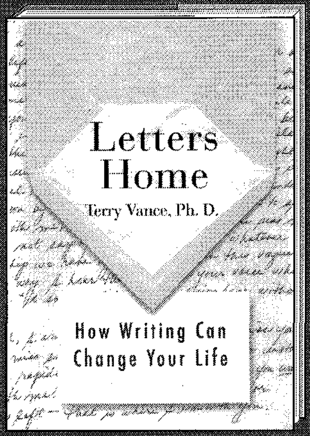

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FORECAST

KLEZMER MADNESS

WHEN the clarinettist David Krakauer played at Yom Kippur services last month, in Scarsdale, he imitated the cry of the shofar, but his improvisations also drew on klezmer, jazz, and the blues. "Sometimes it does get schizophrenic," Krakauer says, though that's not what he had in mind when he named his ensemble Klezmer Madness! He was wondering instead how far he could push klezmer—the musical analogue of *Yiddish*, for God's sake—into the future.

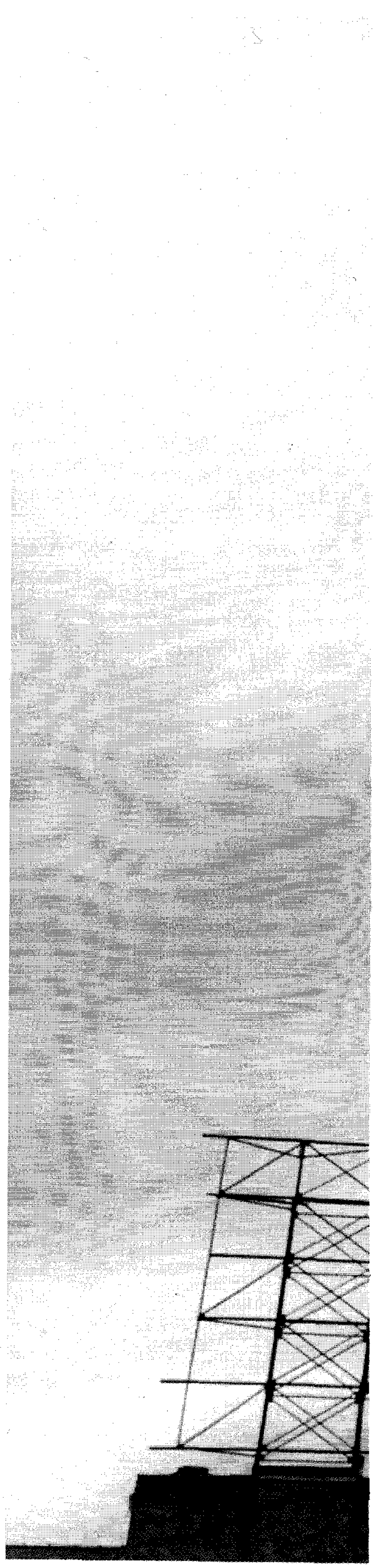
In Europe, it almost goes without saying, everything connected with klezmer—its people, its sounds, the very idea of Jewish celebration—was annihilated during the Second World War. In America, the music should have died out when the klezmorim and their original audience began to wither, its sound having become sweeter and stickier than a glass of the worst Manischewitz. Even in Israel, Yiddish culture was shunned. How is it, then, that klezmer has become one of the primary languages of the avant-garde?

A partial answer lies in the extramusical history of the Jews. The Holocaust, Krakauer says, is "totally relevant" to the resurgence of klezmer, and yet the relationship is "very complicated." Although the music never lost its sense of ecstasy or playfulness, the minor keys that dominate the *bulgars*, *freilachs*, and *doinas* inevitably sounded belatedly prophetic after the war. Klezmer, a dance music, had become a music of mourning. "An important thing I'm talking about in my music is human cruelty," Krakauer explains. "When I first heard klezmer, it had a disturbing effect on me—and then it's so easy to leap to that extra association."

Krakauer, who is forty-two, first made his name in klezmer as a member of the Hendrix-fuelled Klezmatics—"The clarinet," he says, "is the electric guitar of klezmer music"—but he had found his way there relatively late in life. He began his career as a classical musician, playing Schumann, Debussy, and Brahms. He continues to put plenty of time into "solving the mystery of the text," as he describes interpreting classical music, and into presenting some of the more unorthodox contemporary composers. Yet even while he was still a student at New York's High School of Music and Art, Krakauer was pursuing his interest in jazz, gigging with a group led by the pianist Anthony Coleman (later of the Selfhaters Orchestra). Krakauer's love for the clarinet deployed in the New Orleans style—above all, for the quirky, fierce, brilliant Sidney Bechet—suffuses his latest release, "Klezmer, NY."

The centerpiece of the new CD is a half-hour, nine-piece "Klezmer Tribute to Sidney Bechet," which is an imagined musical conversation between Bechet and his contemporary Naftule Brandwein, the roughest of the Lower East Side clarinettists. Musically and personally, the aptly named Brandwein was to klezmer what Bechet was to jazz. He was also, it must be said, a ham in a kosher world—"Freit Sich, Yiddelach" ("Be Happy, Jews"), he exhorted. Yet the furies that soaked Brandwein in drink also helped with the fingering of his astonishing clarinet playing.

The Bechet tribute first took shape in Krakauer's mind when he read in John Chilton's biography of Bechet that Sidney (how differently the name begins to ring) had played "My Yiddishe Momme" during the fifties in Paris. The tribute begins with a series of electronic effects, which Krakauer quickly climbs through, his pitch rising, to make a kind of clarinet collect call through time to reach Bechet and Brandwein. He has no trouble locating them in the "Roumanian Wine Cellar" of the second piece; perhaps they are a bit tipsy already. If Brandwein and Bechet ever met, this is surely where they raised "A Glezele Vayn." By the time Krakauer's version of the Bechet song "Okey Doke" arrives, pursuing a syncopated drumbeat, you can relax. It's a trio you're meeting in that wine cellar, and the tannic acid of the Bechet-Brandwein-Krakauer combo is enough to take the syrupy edge off the wine—as a matter of fact, it will wipe the fingerprints off your glass. "When I play klezmer," Krakauer says, "I go for a sound that is white-hot, a sound that tears." —AARON RETICA



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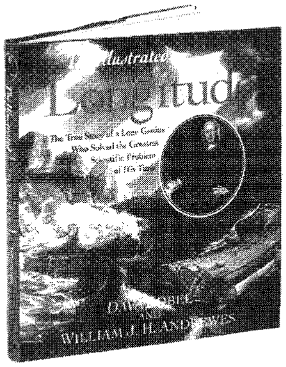
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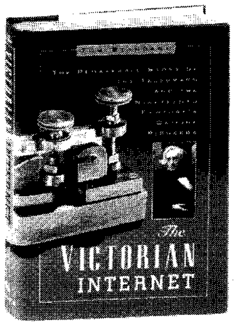

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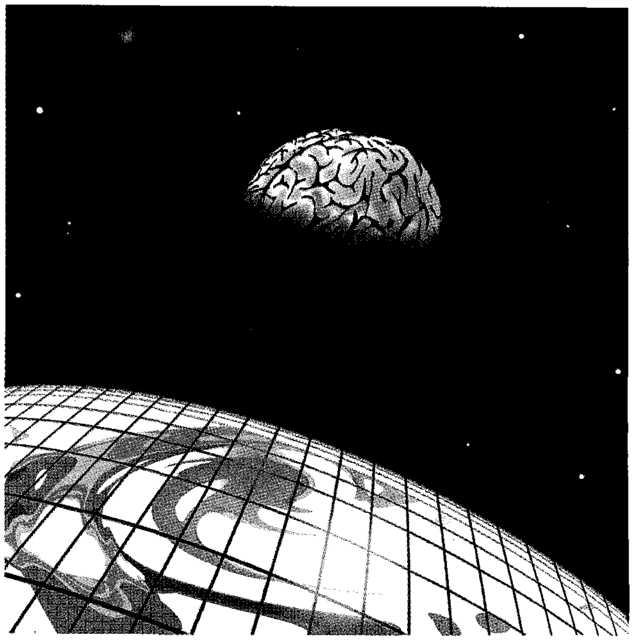
WHAT'S LEFT TO LEARN

If science hasn't come to an end, where is it going?

BY JIM HOLT


ISTVAN BANYAI

A COUPLE of years ago, there was much talk about the scientific enterprise's being a spent rocket. The phrase "the end of science" got bandied about on op-ed pages and TV chat shows, thanks to a book of that title by the journalist John Horgan. The debate between scientific optimists and pessimists petered out inconclusively after a few months—in large part, because no one could ever pin down what "the end of science" was supposed to mean. Did it mean that no more scientific revolutions lay in our future—that with Newton, Darwin, and Einstein behind us we had learned all there was to know about the fundamental workings of the universe? Or did it mean that scientists were bumping up against impassable barriers to further progress—that our brains were too puny, we couldn't build big enough particle accelerators, we were unable to see far enough into the past to observe how life began? Or, again, did it mean that most of the universe was by its very nature lawless and unknowable—that at the heart of the thing lay not an answer but a riddle? Or all of the above?

When you are trying to understand the world, it is unwise to assume that you occupy a privileged position in it. That is the principle Copernicus established five hundred years ago, when he upended the orthodoxy that the Earth was situated in the center of the universe. The Copernican principle also applies to the history of science, as Sir John Maddox observes in "What Remains to Be Discovered" (Free Press; $26). "How can we suppose that science has reached its apogee in the twentieth century?" he asks, with evident exasperation. After all, each of the three centuries preceding this one was marked by achievements as lofty as any of our own. At the end of the nineteenth century, which saw the Darwinian revolution and the emergence of thermodynamics and electromagnetic theory, it looked as if only a few loose ends needed knitting up. Among them were the "luminiferous æther," which was supposed to conduct light waves through space, and the way the color of a glowing hot body changed as its temperature increased. The attempts to deal with these annoying loose ends led, respectively, to the discovery of relativity and to quantum theory—to the overthrow, that is, of "classical" physics.

Maddox, who was the longtime editor of the sober and highly respected

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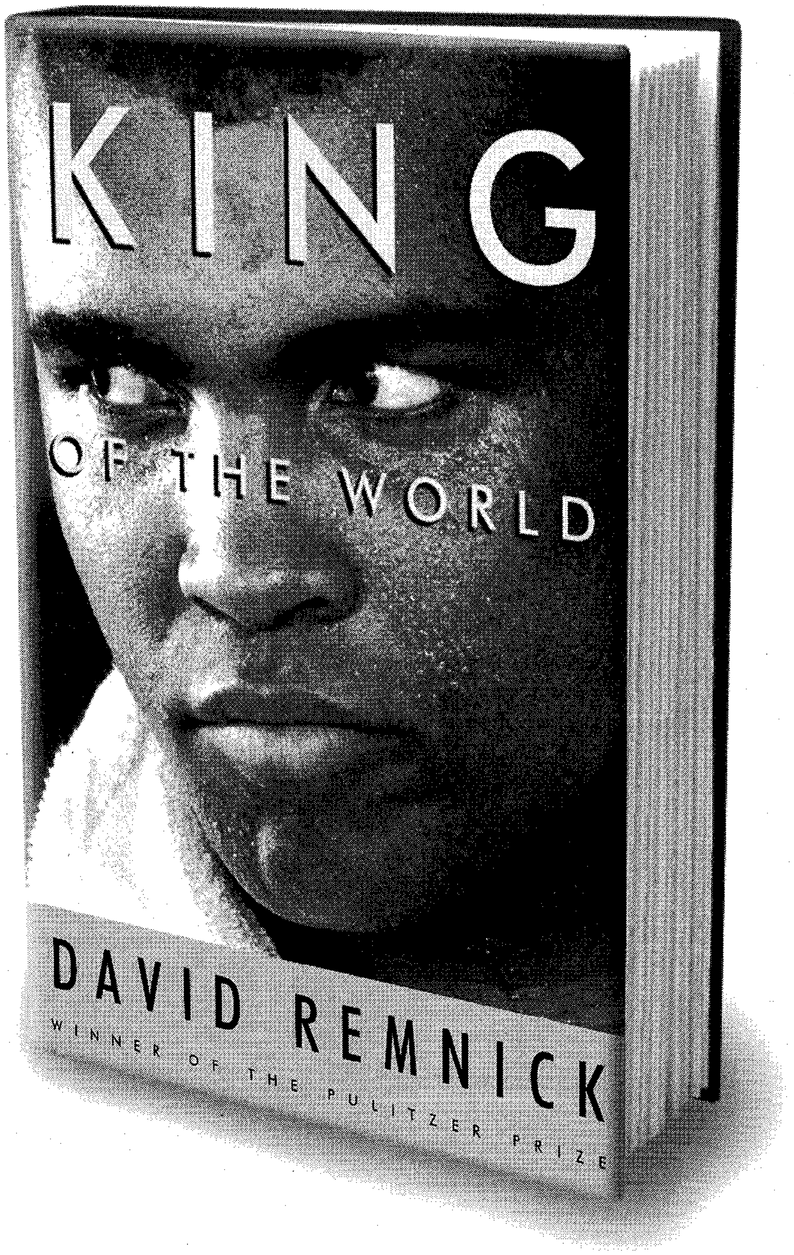
—Toni Morrison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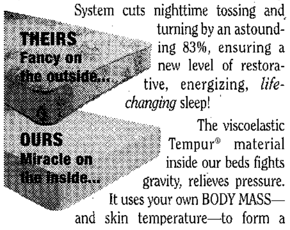
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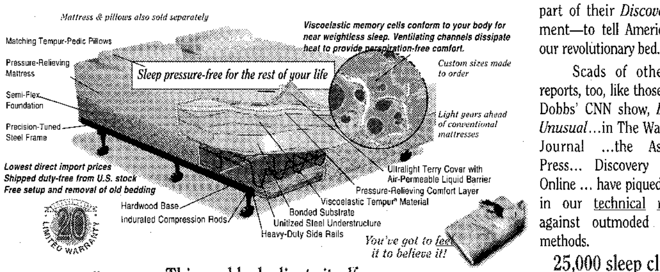
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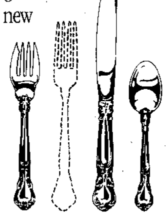

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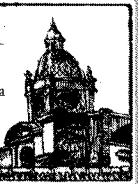
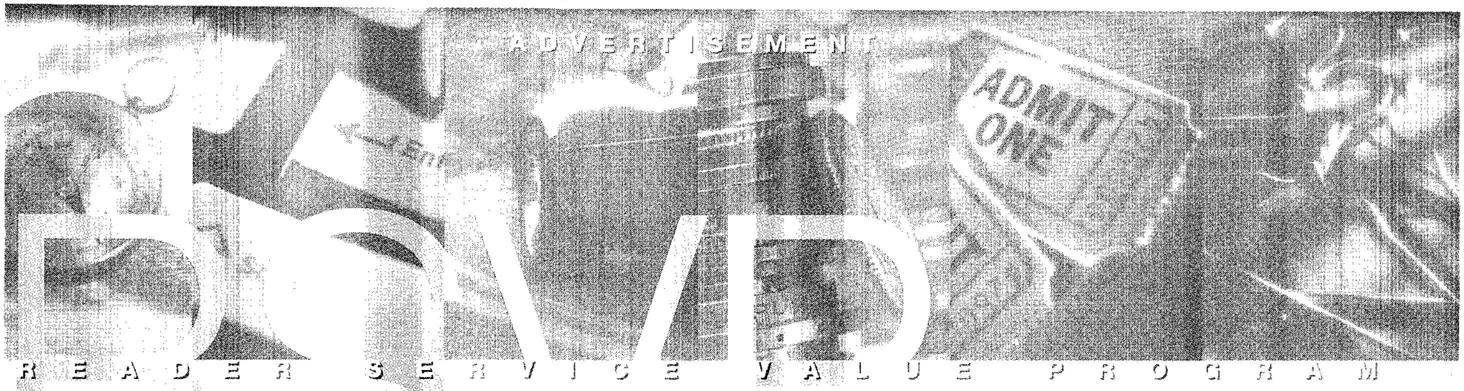


English science journal *Nature* until he stepped down, two years ago, and who was knighted for his services to science, might be considered an ex-officio optimist. Standing on the shoulders of the scientific giants whose work he has published, Maddox peers into the future and tries to descry the shape of advances to come. Being a cautious man, however, he does not peer very far. There are in his book no intrepid prophecies about an Omega Point of total scientific knowledge, no expressions of fin-de-siècle hubris. What one does get is a careful working out, in dry prose, of the near-term discoveries about matter and life which were augured by a couple of decades' worth of *Nature* articles. These discoveries, Maddox expects, will cluster around the four "foci of our present ignorance": How do the fundamental forces of physics fit together? How did life originate? How does the brain produce conscious thought? How does the human genetic code work?

MADDOX is moderately confident that headway in answering all these questions will be made soon. That would seem to be a reasonable attitude—provided the questions are framed in a way that renders them soluble. Are they? For the first three, at least, there are grounds for doubt. Take the case of physics. For a couple of decades now, many physicists have been making a grand boast. They have claimed to be on the verge of discovering what is cheekily called the Theory of Everything. This would be a concise set of formulas (perhaps displayable on a T-shirt) that would explain how gravity, which governs the universe in its large aspects, and quantum theory, which governs it in its small aspects, fit together. Such a theory would reveal the nature of the single "superforce" that must have held sway at the time of the big bang, when large and small were the same. Thus it would presumably clear up three almost metaphysical puzzles: What banged? Why did it bang? And what was going on just before it banged?

The lack of such a unified theory is the "chief present obstacle to a better understanding of the physical world," Maddox writes, and he describes the current research on the most promising proposal to supply that lack. String theory, or M theory, as some physicists



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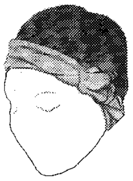

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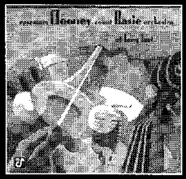
have redubbed it, posits that all matter is generated by little loops vibrating in a space that has many more dimensions than the three we live in. The power and elegance of this idea emerges only in the mathematics, but there's the rub: nobody knows the mathematics. It has been said that M theory is a piece of twenty-first-century physics that dropped by chance into the twentieth century. Unhappily, the math did not drop with it, whereas for every great scientific advance in the past the mathematics came first. Newton invented differential calculus as he figured out the dynamics of the heavens. The mathematics that Einstein needed for relativity had been hanging around for fifty years. For M theory to succeed in the coming decade, this historical pattern will have to reverse itself.

Things seem little better with regard to the second question. "We now know *when* life appeared on Earth's surface," Maddox writes, "but we do not yet know *how* it began." Darwin's theory of natural selection does a good job of explaining how life evolves from life, but it does not tell us how life might arise from non-life. No one has yet discovered molecules that can replicate and evolve in prebiotic conditions. So remote does this possibility seem that Maddox even considers the extravagant hypothesis of Panspermia—the idea that the Earth was seeded with life by an extraterrestrial source in the solar system or beyond it. But, of course, Panspermia only doubles the mystery of life: it requires an explanation not only of how the little inseminators survived the trip to Earth but also of how they managed to arise somewhere else in the first place.

Scientists trying to understand the origins of life at least have the luxury of playing around with chemicals in the lab. They are better off than neurobiologists, whose effort to comprehend the human mental circuitry is hobbled by an insufficiency of volunteers willing to donate their brains to science for experimentation before they are dead. Still, thanks to brain-scanning methods, scientists have in recent decades made great strides beyond Aristotle, who thought that the function of the wrinkled lump of gray meat in our skulls was to cool the blood. Indeed, the Nobel laureates Francis Crick and Gerald



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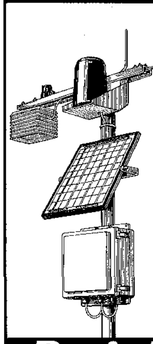

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Edelman have claimed, separately, that a biological account of consciousness itself is within reach. Sadly, the accounts they have sketched don't look much alike.

"But what is consciousness anyway?" Maddox asks. Will that old metaphysical conundrum known as the mind-body problem really be cracked in the next decade or two by scientific methods? Some skeptics maintain that it is logically impossible for any finite system to understand itself—let alone one that, like the brain, was shaped by Darwinian processes hundreds of thousands of years ago for survival on the African savanna. A more complicated reservation has been voiced by the Oxford physicist Roger Penrose, who sees the difficulty as arising not from the feebleness of the brain but from its potency. He is much impressed by the implications for the human mind of Gödel's theorem, a notorious finding about the limitations of formal mathematics. This theorem guarantees that any computer, no matter how powerful, will be blind to some mathematical truth that the human mind can see. From this, Penrose infers that the brain, in producing full Technicolor consciousness, overleaps the bounds of mere computation. How? By harnessing the subtlest of quantum effects—effects that will be understood only after the final formulas of physics are found. It all begins to look like a unified theory of ignorance. "Quantum gravity is mysterious and consciousness is mysterious and wouldn't it be wonderful if one explained the other?" mocks Francis Crick—who has himself purported to locate the seat of our free will in or near a little region of the brain called the "anterior cingulate sulcus."

Compared to such perplexities, figuring out the human genome looks at first blush as easy as falling off a log. Researchers around the world are mapping some eighty thousand genes that constitute the blueprint for humankind at an ever faster clip. They should be finished by the year 2003. But then the task will be to determine what it *means*—in other words, to discover how the actions of various genes, in their endless permutations, influence the way that actual people turn out. This knowledge, as it slowly accumulates, is likely to blur the distinction between "curing disease" and "enhancing capacities." It is not outrageous to imagine that before long scientists will be able to tamper directly with a future child's genetic makeup: adding a little height here and a little I.Q. there, correcting a gene for colon cancer, making the eyes as blue as Paul Newman's. Maddox declares the ethical fears aroused in the research community by the prospect of such gene-line interventions to be "groundless," but he does not explain why.

THE option of fine-tuning one's offspring may be precisely the sort of thing that most people really want from science. The human genome is the parochial concern of a single species on a single planet, but mastering it will have great consequences for the balance sheet of pleasure and pain. The same cannot be said for the three other questions that Maddox believes define the future of science. In particle physics, the "standard model" we already have may be a bit of a stick-and-bubblegum contraption, but it works just fine, and suffices for all our technological needs. (Physicists today affect the world more by concocting derivatives at Goldman, Sachs than by conceiving unified theories.) Similarly, understanding the origins of life—a onetime event that happened some four billion years ago—would be nice, but not nearly so nice as knowing how to keep our own lives from coming to a premature, agonizing, or undignified end. To reduce the gossamer states of our consciousness to the solidity of computational mechanics would be a fine thing, but the subjective quality of those states would remain the same. (Now, if this knowledge enabled us to endow *robots* with enough consciousness to vacuum our carpets and serve cocktails to our guests, that would be another matter.) So if the answers to some of these questions arrive later than Maddox expects—or not at all—that might be cause for intellectual regret, but as humans living in the practical world we need not repine. As the gastronome Brillat-Savarin once observed, the discovery of a new dish does more for human happiness than the discovery of a star. ♦

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BRIEFLY NOTED

EVENING, by Susan Minot (Knopf; $23). Ann Lord's life has been shaped by the men who have married her. As she lies on her deathbed, trying to make some sense of that life, a rediscovered balsam pillow evokes a Maine wedding, in 1954, where she fell in love for the first—and perhaps the last—time. This almost crude conceit produces a narrative of considerable ambition and complexity: the mental flotsam tossed up by Ann's infirmity is unnervingly meaningless, while that long-ago weekend of ferry rides, paper lanterns, and midnight swims is rendered with an immediacy that verges on the erotic. For heroine and reader alike, death's painful confusions are tempered by the spirited directness of Ann's younger self, as yet unscathed by time and experience.

PLAIN AND NORMAL, by James Wilcox (Little, Brown; $24). "How can anyone be plain and normal around you?" demands Dawne, a destitute ex-meter-reader, of Severinus Lloyd Norris, whose ex-wife, Pearl Fay, has moved Dawne into her (formerly their) house in Yonkers. Norris, who thinks he's gay, designs labels for a living, but he makes his biggest bloopers when trying to pigeonhole others, or himself. Wilcox is an American Voltaire—a funny guy, seriously interested in faith, hope, and charity—and his work has the ingenuity and pathos of vaudeville.

DEATH IN SUMMER, by William Trevor (Viking; $23.95). A sudden death brings together a rootless, shifty young woman named Pettie and the recently widowed Thaddeus Davenant, who is trying to find a nanny for his baby daughter. With a badly typed letter of reference and threadbare clothing, Pettie is quickly turned away, but not before she has formed an irresistible (if deceived) impression of the life she could share with Thaddeus. Trevor inhabits his characters so fully that they seem present before us, and his exploration of their accidental connections demonstrates, yet again, his ability to imbue the most casual actions with unsettling significance.

LOST IN TRANSLATION, by Nicole Mones (Delacorte; $23.95). Alice Mannegan is a red-haired translator based in Beijing. Though she behaves like a gadfly, she's bound by her past—her father is a racist United States congressman, and her shame is such that she's only at ease in a culture where she's an outcast. It's an interesting premise, made more so by plot turns that follow routes travelled by Teilhard de Chardin. The author of this first novel has herself spent considerable time in China, and she conveys with poignant élan the trance of unrequited love for the exotic.

AN EMPIRE WILDERNESS: TRAVELS INTO AMERICA'S FUTURE, by Robert D. Kaplan (Random House; $27.50). Kaplan, who wrote the informative "Balkan Ghosts," reports on his roamings closer to home—North America, west of the Mississippi. He offers fine descriptive writing, a record of places, people, and scenery that could not be better. Unfortunately, Kaplan also wants to be a prophet. He thinks his observations foretell a United States divided between the rich, who are involved in the global economy, and the poor, who do the dirty work, with national patriotism yielding to local or class loyalties. As long ago as the nineteen-fifties, however, the sociologist Herbert Gans distinguished between "cosmopolitans" and "locals" in Levittown, and for decades commentators have been predicting a united Europe divided into her ancient provinces. What strike Kaplan as innovations are long-standing conditions and opinions recast in contemporary terms.

DANCING NAKED IN THE MIND FIELD, by Kary Mullis (Pantheon; $24). Mullis is the outspoken sybarite, surfer, and biochemist who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1993, for inventing the polymerase chain reaction, a process that underlies modern-day DNA testing. His reflections and recollections, told in a shaggy, free-associative style that testifies to his oft-proclaimed fondness for psychoactive drugs, are by turns entertaining and self-important. They are also usefully cranky and combative, raising provocative questions about received truths from the scientific establishment on global warming, the ozone layer, and H.I.V. and AIDS.

A MEDIEVAL FAMILY: THE PASTONS OF FIFTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLAND, by Frances and Joseph Gies (HarperCollins; $27.50). Like the nobles above them and their rivals among the gentry, the Pastons were mercenary, quarrelsome, and ambitious. Their family letters, an archive that survived by happenstance, offer the modern reader a unique intimacy with medieval people in a time of turbulence marked by war abroad (the Hundred Years' War with France) and at home (the Wars of the Roses). The Gieses, who specialize in making the Middle Ages accessible to nonspecialists, have done a wonderful job of linking and amplifying the Pastons' words, creating a true historical novel.

HAY, by Paul Muldoon (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $22). Paul Muldoon, who was raised in Northern Ireland and is now an American citizen, has long been a quirky and dislocated poet—a wry virtuoso of Old World dissolution and New World chutzpah—whose wanderings have taken him from ancient Rome to Auden's bedroom. But here, in his ninth book, which includes a brilliant sequence of ninety New Jersey-based haiku, he seems to have found something of a temporary home in the visionary lyric: "Though the cankered peach / is felled, the bird's nest it held / is still out of reach."

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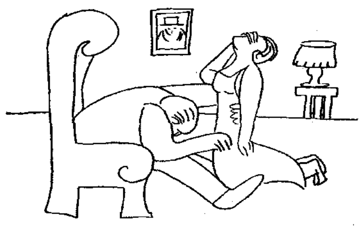

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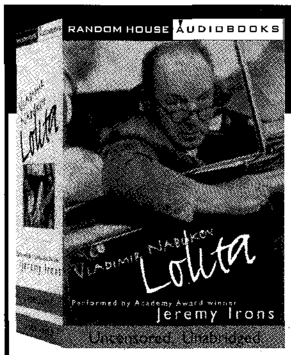

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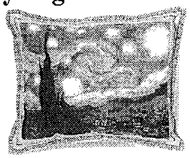

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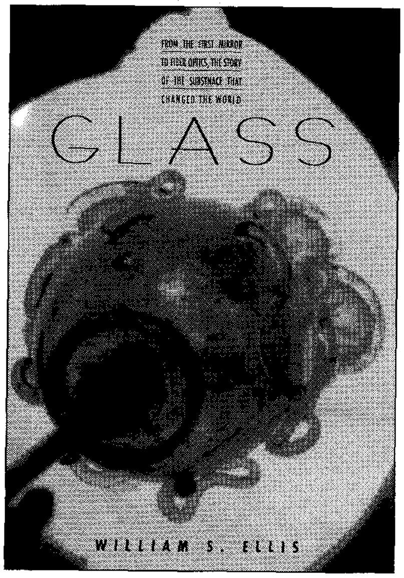
FROM THE FIRST MIRROR TO FIBER OPTICS, THE STORY OF THE SUBSTANCE THAT CHANGED THE WORLD
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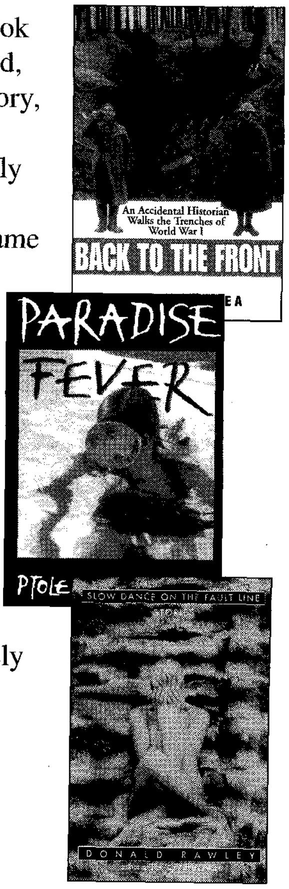
GLASS, by **William S. Ellis**, celebrates the functionality and versatility of a natural wonder that is both durable and delicate; that has become intimately entwined with the century's most powerful technological advances; that has brought vision to the sight-deprived and light to the darkness, and is known to all but understood by very few. With grace, charm, and authority, Ellis reveals the many faces and facets of this protean material which is constantly being demolished, reborn, and redefined in order to best serve a relentlessly changing world.

World War One is beyond the firsthand recall of nearly everyone living today, yet it has left a deep scar on the imaginative landscape of our century. ***BACK TO THE FRONT*** is journalist **Stephen O'Shea**'s story of his own 450-mile trek across no-man's-land eight decades after the final round was fired. An evocative fusion of past and present—a combination of vivid history and opinionated travel writing—O'Shea's book recreates the terrible battles of the Western Front while offering impassioned, intensely personal perspectives on the war itself, on the cultivation of memory, and on the state of a still-disfigured land.

Paradise is not always everything it's cracked up to be. This was especially true in the self-help, New Age decade of the seventies, when **Ptolemy Tompkins**—the son of the bestselling author of *The Secret Life of Plants*—came of age. In ***PARADISE FEVER***, Tompkins recalls a childhood spent among the surreal assortment of orgiasts, Yeti-hunters, would-be space ship communicants, and visionaries of every stripe who inhabited his charismatic father's universe (not to mention the family's house and swimming pool). In Tompkins's comic yet harrowing account, this particular boy's life is like the seventies distilled: exhilarating, outrageous, and liberating—but also deeply disturbing, with a despair born of chaos.

Donald Rawley was a young writer of uncommon power, vision and sensitivity who died before he received the national recognition he richly deserved. His story collection, ***SLOW DANCE ON THE FAULT LINE***, offers fourteen tales that limn the tarnished glamour of the City of Angels, shining a merciless light on a unique American metropolis perched precariously on the rim of the desert and on the edge of reality. Rawley artfully excavates L.A.'s sun-bleached graveyard of broken hopes, shattered dreams, and sordid memories with stories that powerfully expose unvarnished truths.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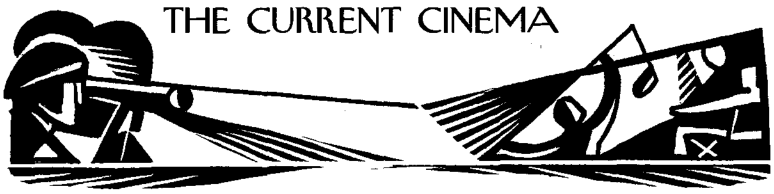

HAUNTED BY THE PAST

Toni Morrison's lyricism encounters Oprah's blunt common sense.

BY DAVID DENBY

THE movie version of Toni Morrison's novel "Beloved" is not an event to be enjoyed; it's an event to be endured, rather like the dedication of a new building on the Washington Mall. Weeks before the movie opened, *Time* unfurled the ceremonial bunting in a journalistic package so elevated in tone that the magazine seemed awed by the importance of its own coverage. When the public gets a proper look at the movie, the bunting may turn out to be crêpe. Still, media éclat of this proportion is bound to electrify the Morrison industry in the universities and the schools; one can only squirm in sympathy for all the seventeen-year-olds who will be forced to sit through the movie, discuss it, and write papers based on the inevitable study guide. Oprah Winfrey, who produced the movie and stars in it, optioned "Beloved" when it was published, in 1987. In its standard version, the story of her eleven-year-long struggle to get the project completed now humbles the construction of Angkor Wat as a triumph of elbow grease and clout. Part of one's dismay at the results is caused by the sure knowledge that everyone involved in this right-minded project—including Jonathan Demme, whom Oprah hired to direct the film—worked with an acute, even excruciating sense of responsibility. There's no gravy in attacking a woman who has done so much to promote reading, but one can ask—can't one?—whether some novels shouldn't be left in peace as mere books, unredeemed by the movies.

The power of Toni Morrison's work is derived, in part, from indirection. Morrison cannily set her novel of slavery in the moment *after*—in 1873, eight years after the end of the Civil War and eighteen years after Sethe, a slave at the Sweet Home farm in Kentucky and the mother of four, propelled herself and her children over the river and into the free state of Ohio. In 1873, Sethe is just one of many black people who are struggling to live in the backwash of a catastrophe that lasted more than two hundred years. Men from destroyed families wander about, looking for a home; the deceased, barbarously taken in death, show up as spirits and make their claim on the survivors. Sethe, her children, and her lover—Paul D, another refugee from Sweet Home—exist in a present entirely saturated in the

Struggling with ghosts: Danny Glover and Oprah Winfrey as Paul D and Sethe in "Beloved."

MARK ULRIKSEN

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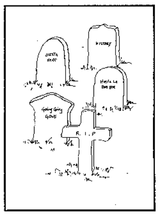

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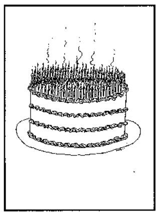

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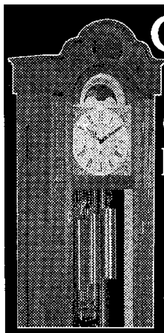

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past, which crashes in on them, unwanted, unbidden, and impossible to assimilate. There is a casually epic quality to the book's recollected and narrated background: the men, women, and children lost, sold, driven mad, or killed; the escapes and captures, the years of sordid vagabondage; the mesmerizing, sickening, endless human traffic.

In this book about telling, Morrison comes at things, in her harshly intimate prose, from odd angles and at unexpected times; she is a powerfully allusive writer who cultivates a wide streak of authorial mischief and hauteur, teasing us with the conflict between what is told and what is withheld. Grudgingly, we get the point: a past so heavily fraught is not easily accessible to simple consecutive narrative—it must be worked over, worked *through*, and we, in turn, must struggle to put the overlapping fragments together in our heads. This great, ornery novel has to be read slowly and steadily or it cannot be read at all. The main lines, however, are clear enough. Sethe fled Sweet Home farm in the eighteen-fifties because she wanted to love her children without permission and without end, as if they were hers forever. When her old slave master suddenly appeared in Ohio, intending to take the family back to slavery, she ran to a shed behind the house and attempted to put to death her two boys and two girls. The book places the reader deep into the consciousness of an ex-slave who, like Medea, acts as a free woman—deep enough so that her decision years ago makes some sort of tormented, and tormenting, moral sense.

The book poses a trap for adaptors, and the screenwriters, Richard LaGravenese, Akosua Busia, and Adam Brooks, fell into it. Most of the emotionally significant events take place in the past; the present is a shuddering remnant, struggling to exist. Yet the filmmakers have tipped the balance toward the present. We are in the Ohio farmhouse, a gray and featureless place, and when we are shown a past event—say, an ex-slave's memory of being whipped or shackled—the image flares luridly on the screen for an instant and disappears. Many of these flashbacks will mean nothing to the uninitiated, while those who have read the book may be shocked by the blunt stupidity of mere illustration—shocked by the

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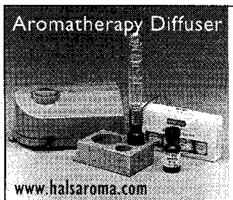

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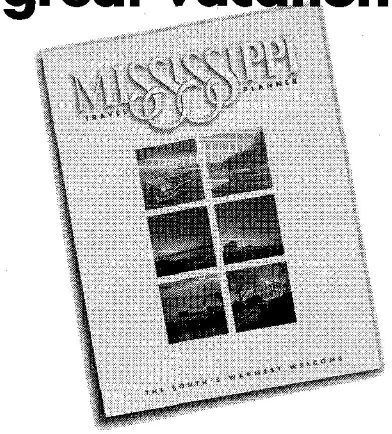

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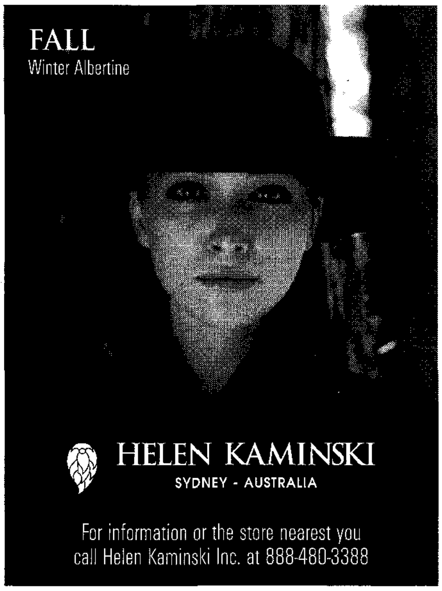
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stupidity of movies. What is before us is either commonplace or sensational, and unsatisfactory either way. Toni Morrison uses real ghosts, and the filmmakers, in a blunder of Knoblauchian dimensions, literalize these ghosts in terms familiar from old movies. The Ohio house is haunted by the presence of the single child—a little girl—whom Sethe (played by Winfrey) actually killed eighteen years earlier. This presence, or whatever it is, flings a dog about, gouging its eyes, and as Sethe's old friend, Paul D (Danny Glover), enters the house, the corridors turn red, the floorboards shake, and roaring noises and strangled cries can be heard on the soundtrack. One might suspect Demme of doing a period parody (Hammer Films, 1958?) if the occasion were not so solemn. Sethe and her remaining daughter, Denver (Kimberly Elise), are willing to live with the ghost (Sethe's boys have run off); but Paul D refuses, and, after a table-shoving match in which much crockery is dashed to the floor, he throws the nasty thing out.

After this ludicrous beginning, "Beloved" settles down—it settles down too much. Paul D slowly lowers Sethe's dress and kisses the tree of scars on her back; later, when they are in bed, we can see that his back is crisscrossed with scars, too. Sethe and Paul D come together in freedom, gratefully linked by what they have endured. But the many scenes with Winfrey and Glover lack surprise, heat, tension; the two actors are not (as we wish them to be) transfigured flesh; they perform cautiously and even dully, as if they feared that too much temperament would destroy the exemplary nature of the occasion. Winfrey acted in Spielberg's "The Color Purple," and has appeared in a number of made-for-TV movies. No one can question her bravery, but bravery and candor (the Opravian virtues) are no more than a part of what acting is about. Oprah speaks her lines firmly but lightly, and her rational, unlined face shows little consciousness of suffering; much of the time she's simply not there. Lisa Gay Hamilton, the actress who plays the young Sethe in a series of tumultuous flashbacks, provides a startling contrast. In the movie's one sustained flashback, young Sethe, lost and dying in the woods, is befriended by a half-mad white girl (Kessia Kordelle), a runaway herself, and the two of them deliver Sethe's baby in a sinking boat. In this episode, and in the climactic memory of violence against the children, Hamilton looks terrified—her features are swollen with fear and rage. But when the camera returns to Winfrey, who has related the horrors we have just seen, her face offers no recollection of fear and rage, and in an instant we fall from Greek tragedy to a TV movie. Glover is TV-movieish, too: his soft voice, comforting as down feathers, his charming gaiety and sweetness reassure Sethe, as they should, but we discover from him nothing of what we want—the sense of incomparable experience, of terrors confronted and mastered.

One feels an uneasiness throughout these scenes: a director doesn't appear to be in charge. What happened to the superb narrative filmmaker who made "Handle with Care" and "Melvin and Howard"? Can it possibly have been Demme's decision to set much of "Beloved" in that oppressive dark house, and not to show more of the life of Sweet Home farm or the botched escape, in which Sethe's friends and her husband get trapped and only the pregnant Sethe breaks into the woods and over the river? It has been suggested by many that Demme did penance for the gruesome, sensationally effective "Silence of the Lambs" with the sombre AIDS melodrama "Philadelphia." If so, the penance has now taken the form of a renunciation of storytelling itself, Demme's greatest strength. In a novel, one can dramatize the act of telling, but in a movie something must be told, and in "Beloved" almost every possibility of narrative excitement and moral exploration has been ignored. If Sethe's mental activity is impossible to re-create in a movie, then surely her slave past has to be re-created—the life that brings her to the point of murdering her children. For it is the moral condition of the murderess which fascinates us, not the admittedly pressing domestic problem of how to live with a ghost. After Paul D banishes the unseen spirit, a young woman (Thandie Newton), dressed exquisitely in black, emerges from a nearby creek, groaning and snorting like a sea beast. The ghost of the slain daughter has returned as a young woman—as Beloved. Beautiful Thandie Newton flops about like a rag doll, roaring and hissing, and even croaking, in apparent homage to lit-

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tle Linda Blair in "The Exorcist." And when she speaks she speaks very, very slowly, in the manner, I suppose, of the child who was killed. But it's more than embarrassing to watch a grown woman drooling and awkwardly mouthing words as if she were deaf or retarded. Who says a ghost must speak very slowly? Why shouldn't it talk like Sojourner Truth—or like Bessie Smith, for that matter?

The ghost remains the problem, and in truth it is hard to say what Morrison meant by it. Is it a figment of Sethe's guilt and desire? The spirit ancestor of African folklore? A metaphoric realization of the way the past presses in on a memory-haunted ex-slave? Beloved comes back to claim the love of the mother who killed her. Mother and daughter are reconciled, at least momentarily, and both Morrison and the movie appear to be setting up a feminist myth. In one of the dominant patriarchal accounts of survival, Aeneas escapes the burning city of Troy with his father on his back and his little boy by his side; he manages to lose his wife in the blaze, but the male line, still intact, carries the past into the future. In "Beloved," by contrast, the men die or run away, and it is the women who keep African-American life going. (Sethe's other daughter, Denver, who is seen leaving the dark Ohio house in a smart little hat, walks into the future.) Proudly and blindly tedious, the movie is a trial to sit through, but the images of women at least give us something to hold on to. The contrasting faces of the lovely young actresses Thandie Newton and Kimberly Elise are magical together, and the performance of the elderly Beah Richards, as Sethe's mother-in-law, the inspired amateur preacher Baby Suggs, is almost redemption itself. Richards, bending and shaking, and lifting her great cracked voice, is so completely alive that she seems to gather up all of black experience in the body of one very unghostly old lady. ♦

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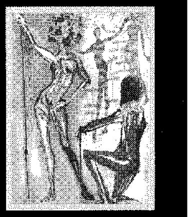

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THE THEATRE

RESURRECTION

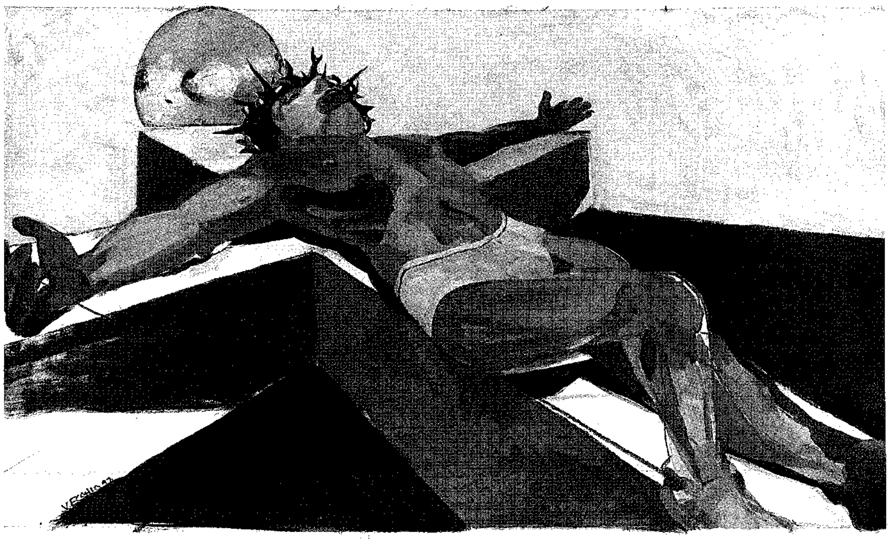
"Corpus Christi"'s tortured route to the stage.

BY NANCY FRANKLIN

IN May, months before Terrence McNally's new play, "Corpus Christi," opened, it achieved a level of notoriety that would normally be to die for. In this case, though, that ugly metaphor shrivelled in the face of the even uglier notoriety: anonymous death threats directed at McNally and at everyone involved with the Manhattan Theatre Club, where the play was going to be staged, and head-bangingly loud, outraged protests from the Catholic League, a vigilant—some would tack an "e" on the end of that word—and hard-line activist group. What the Catholic League, along with like-minded organizations, was protesting was the depiction in McNally's play of a homosexual Jesus Christ figure. No one who was outraged by the play at this early date had actually read it; in fact, McNally hadn't finished rewriting it. Patience, tolerance, and a wait-and-see approach, however, were not part of the protesters' program. Dubbing the unseen work "the 'Gay Jesus' play," the Catholic League set about waging a relentless media campaign against it. When the death threats came, and a threat to burn down the theatre, the Manhattan Theatre Club—McNally's artistic home for two decades—cancelled the production. Thus began the second act of the firestorm.

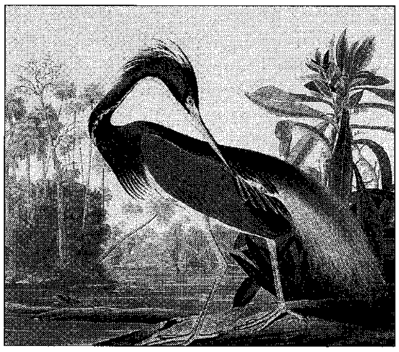
Playwrights, actors, directors, and editorialists from near and far quickly stepped up to the mike, finding as much to criticize in the theatre's decision as they did in the bullying tactics—no, the terrorist tactics—of some of the protesters. They petitioned the theatre, calling the cancellation a capitulation. Lynne Meadow, the artistic director of M.T.C., was accused of censorship. Athol Fugard, whose work M.T.C. has long supported, pulled his next play from the theatre. Larry Kramer characterized the cancellation as "a remarkably hysterical act," and offered such unhelpful musings as "A hate call on an answering machine is de rigueur for anyone in New York with strong opinions." Some writers, like Craig Lucas, made thoughtful, if doomed, attempts to reason with the opponent in print.

Within a few days of cancelling the production, Meadow announced that it was back on, and that the theatre had



Terrence McNally offers up a Sunday-school lesson in sex and religion, Texas style.

RICCARDO VECCHIO



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been assured of support from the Mayor and the Police Commissioner's office. It had also hired a crack security firm. I do think of the reinstatement of "Corpus Christi" as nothing less than a triumph. I also find nothing deplorable about Meadow's initial decision to cancel the production. It may be that things had to happen the way they did so that they would never have to happen this way again; both sides now have a detailed map of the battlefield. If Meadow's initial response had been the final one, that would have constituted a setback for civil rights and artistic freedom. Still, a setback gives you something to work from; it can be a platform that provides support for leaps forward. A setback should not be confused with the end of the world. The end of the world probably looks more like downtown Oklahoma City on the morning of April 19, 1995.

The president of the Catholic League, William Donohue, continued to maintain that M.T.C. should have cancelled "Corpus Christi" "in the name of common decency"; as he saw it, his organization had no choice but to fight back in a war that it hadn't started. On October 13th, the night of the play's opening, mirror-image rallies took place outside the theatre, on West Fifty-fifth Street. On one side, the message was "Take Your Play to Hell." On the other, it was the gospel according to Oprah: "Free Speech Not Only Lives—It Rocks!"

NOW, about the play. It is only a slight overstatement to say that the most interesting aspect of the evening is that the audience must pass through a metal detector before entering the theatre proper; whatever sense of expectation and excitement is in the air during the actual performance of "Corpus Christi" is a lingering remnant of that experience. While the cells of one's body are slightly tensed for action, the cells of one's brain have the evening off. In fact, they've been ordered to take the evening off. Before the play begins, we see some young men sitting on the edge of the stage and milling around near it, wearing casual street clothes, and we're not sure if they're actors or audience members. Then one of them gets up and starts talking to us. "We are going to tell you an old and familiar story," he says. "One you've all heard over and over, again and again. One you

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believe or one you don't. There's no suspense and fewer surprises. You all know how it turns out. But it's a story that bears repeating. . . . The playwright asks your indulgence, as do we, the actors. There are no tricks up our sleeves. No malice in our hearts. We're glad you're here."

Ah, the old no-tricks-up-our-sleeves trick. Right away, we sense something fishy going on here—and it isn't the miracle of the fishes. The request for our indulgence seems to indicate a lack of trust in the audience's ability to approach this work with an open mind. Just as McNally has the right to say what he wants to say, don't we have the right to think what we want to think? Doesn't each member of the audience have the right to determine his or her own level of indulgence? In his attempt to short-circuit our natural and various responses to his work, McNally deprives us of one of the pleasures of going to the theatre: to find out what we think and how we feel. Then, too, there is one's inner psychoanalyst, whose unspoken response to someone's declaring that he has no malice in his heart is "Yes. And I am Marie of Rumania."

The cast of thirteen actors in "Corpus Christi" is directed by Joe Mantello, who also directed McNally's "Love! Valour! Compassion!," which originated at M.T.C. four years ago. Like that play, which was set mostly in an old house in upstate New York, this is an ensemble work—a story of a group of men on a spiritual journey. McNally has a gift for seeing the transcendent in ordinary moments, and there were times during "L! V! C!" when the poignance of watching human beings try to capture such moments took the audience on a spiritual journey, too. In his new play, whose starting point is Corpus Christi, Texas—which is, not insignificantly, where McNally grew up—we are witnesses to the birth, life, and death of Joshua, the Christ figure. We are introduced one by one to the apostles and to Joshua by an actor playing John the Baptist, and they then, as they say on talk shows, tell us a little bit about themselves. This scene, which follows the plea for indulgence, actually requires more than that—it requires the patience of Job. Eleven times, in a slow, reverential voice, John the Baptist says, "I bless you, Michael"—or Ben, or Greg, or whomever. "I baptize you and recognize your divinity as a human being. I adore you, Michael. I christen you Philip." The pace is that of a water ballet, as if Mantello had said to the actors, "Now, be gentle. Pretend you're a four-year-old learning how to pet a cat without making it bite you"—the audience, of course, being the cat, which within a short time feels as jumpy as if it were on a hot tin roof. When the men change into identical khakis and white button-down shirts after being introduced, I couldn't help thinking of the Gap's ad campaign: "Jesus Wore Khakis." I had plenty of time to concoct such silliness during the play's two hours, for, other than settling the question of whether Jesus wore boxers or briefs, "Corpus Christi," while extremely ponderous, gave me very little to ponder. In his Catholic background and his Texas boyhood, McNally has two subjects that he could have mined profitably. But in his attempt to make an equation between religious persecution and sexual persecution, and by imposing the strict formula of parable on his material—the very real pain of being a high-school misfit, the wisdom that comes with maturity—he drains it of life and of drama, and leaves us with a play that is very much less than the sum of its parts.

Bad cases make bad law, it is said. Here is a case of bad theatre making good policy, which is as it should be. I'd rather have seen a better play, but I also would not want to have been prevented from seeing this play. It is unlikely that McNally will ever again be denied a house for his work; and it is unlikely that the people who want to sit in that house with him, or any other playwright, will be denied that chance anytime soon. As for those who wanted to burn down the house, let them stand outside in the cold if they'd rather. If they like, they may come inside; in the name of common decency, the door is open. ♦

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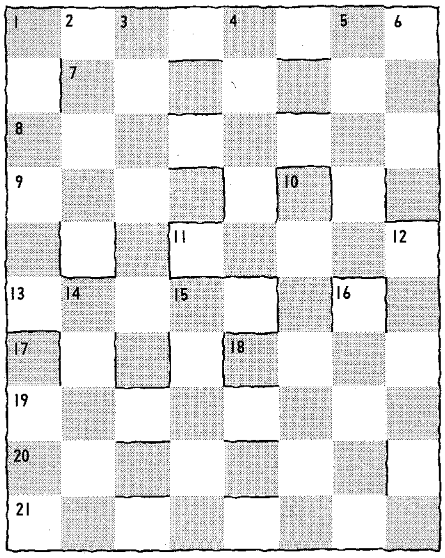


ACROSS

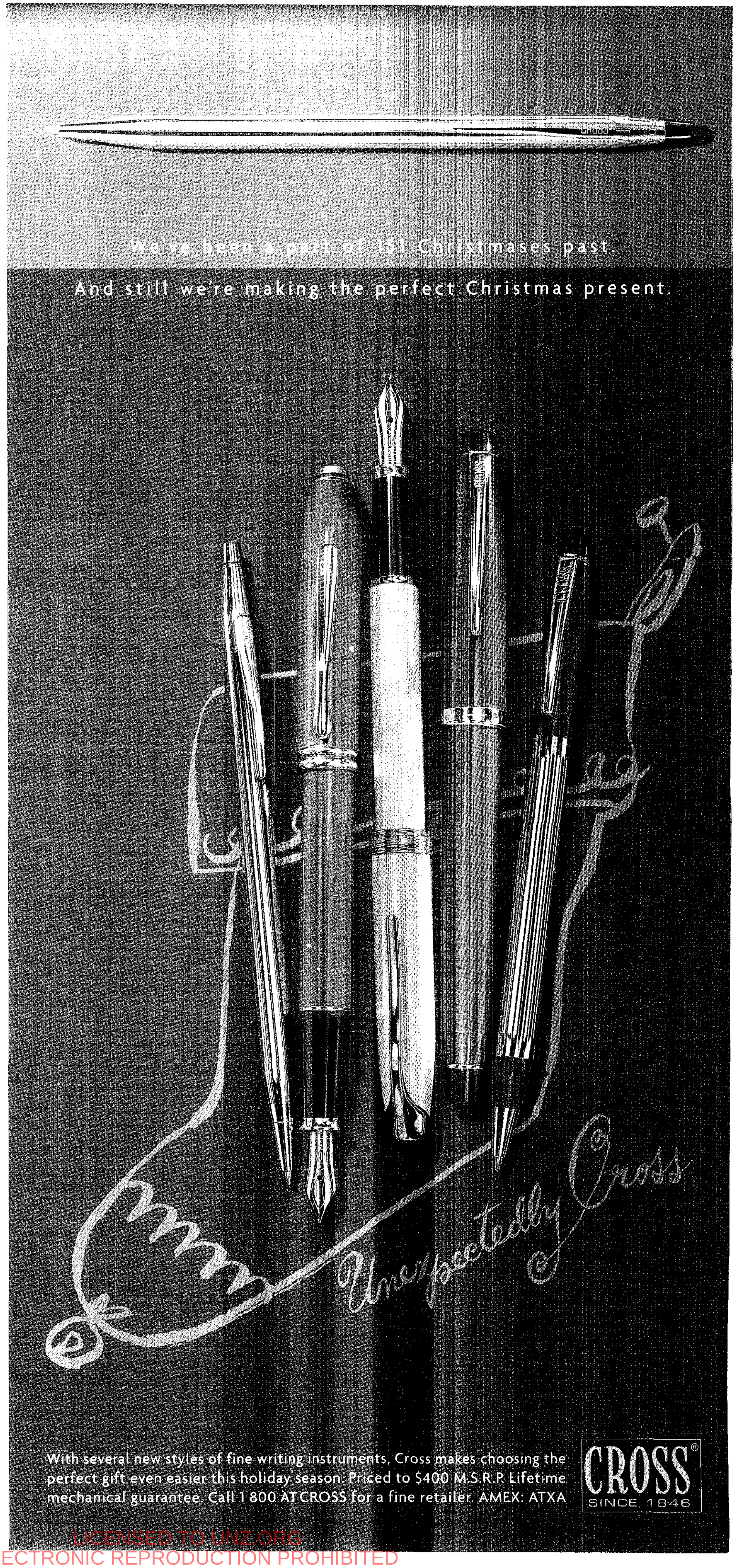
1 Next rude digit has stuck out (8)
7 Angle from old boat house in the sound (7)
8 I do taxes, Dotty gets rusty (8)
9 Finely cut 500 diamonds (4)
11 English diarist spies on hearing (5)
13 A Latin's into South American and Cuban music (5)
18 Knight's wild rice (4)
19 Note penned by a wise old Greek forebear (8)
20 F.D.R.'s idea of uncovered fish, reportedly (3,4)
21 Next real screwball is outside (8)

DOWN

1 Beaten Sox due for departure (6)
2 "Kiss a cross" is a Cartesian line (1-4)
3 Play a prank on the Parisian drip (7)
4 Customs of speech in American era (5)
5 Magritte after starting "My Foe" (5)
6 Post all but the first of poems by Kay (4)
10 Trade jabs with bronzed Greek (7)
12 Carla's sick of holy rites (6)
14 English queen, by addition (5)
15 Material was convincing to listeners (5)
16 String loop held by TV handyman (5)
17 Decline of Hollywood's Duke pronounced (4)

• •

The solution to puzzle No. 63 appears on page 243. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's Guide to Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send your fax number or a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Solvers' Guide," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. For an electronic version, send an E-mail to puzzleguide@newyorker.com.



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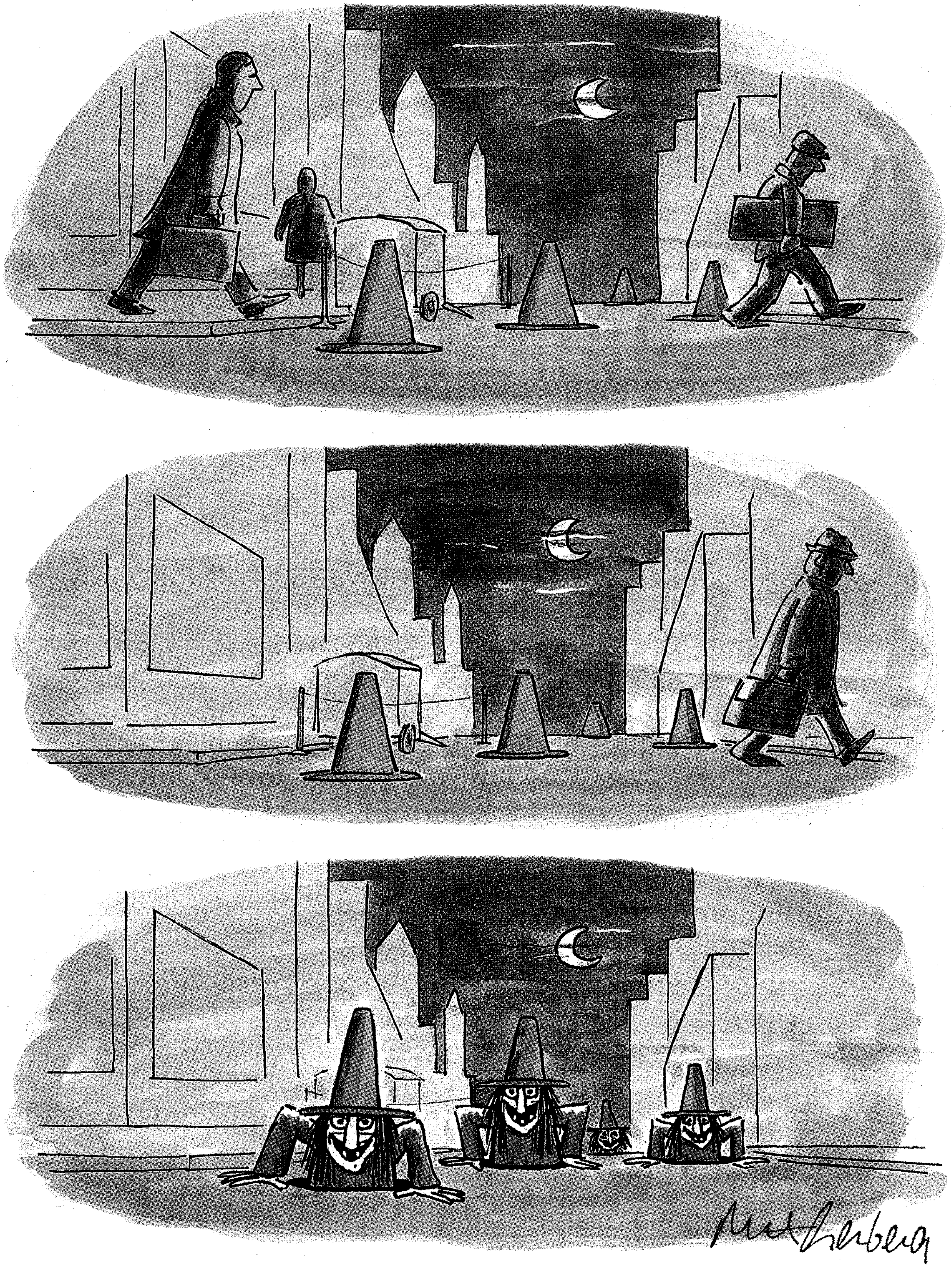
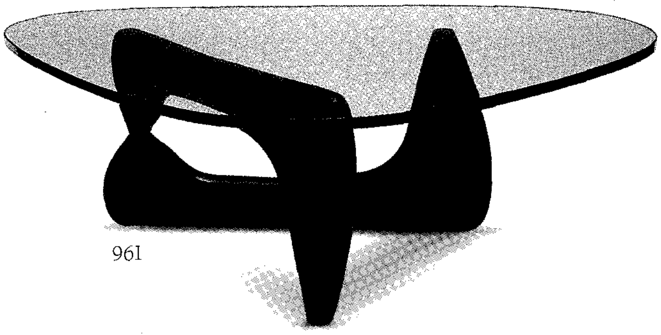
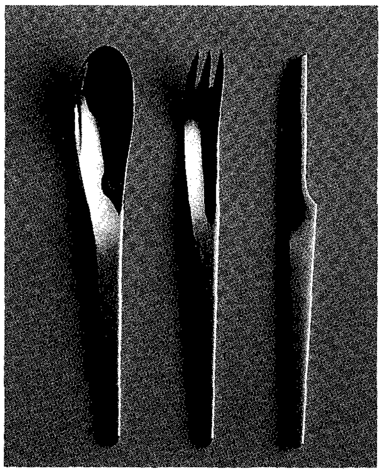


961. **Isamu Noguchi. Table.** 1948. Ebonized walnut and glass. 15¾ x 50 x 36" (40 x 127 x 91.4 cm). Gift of Robert Gruen.



961

962. **Arne Jacobsen. Cutlery.** 1957. Stainless steel. Knife 8½" (21.5cm) long; fork 8½" (21.5 cm) long; spoon 8⅜" (21.3 cm) long. Gift of Georg Jensen Silversmiths.



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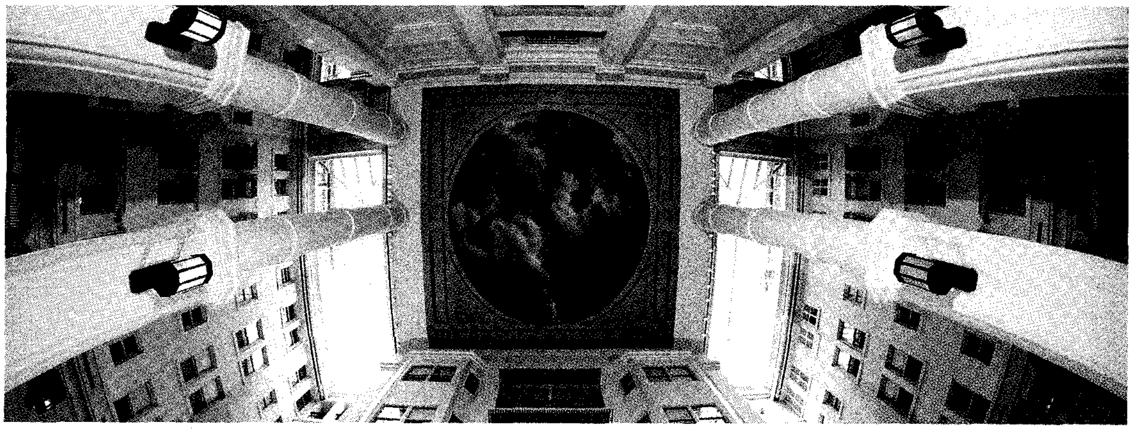

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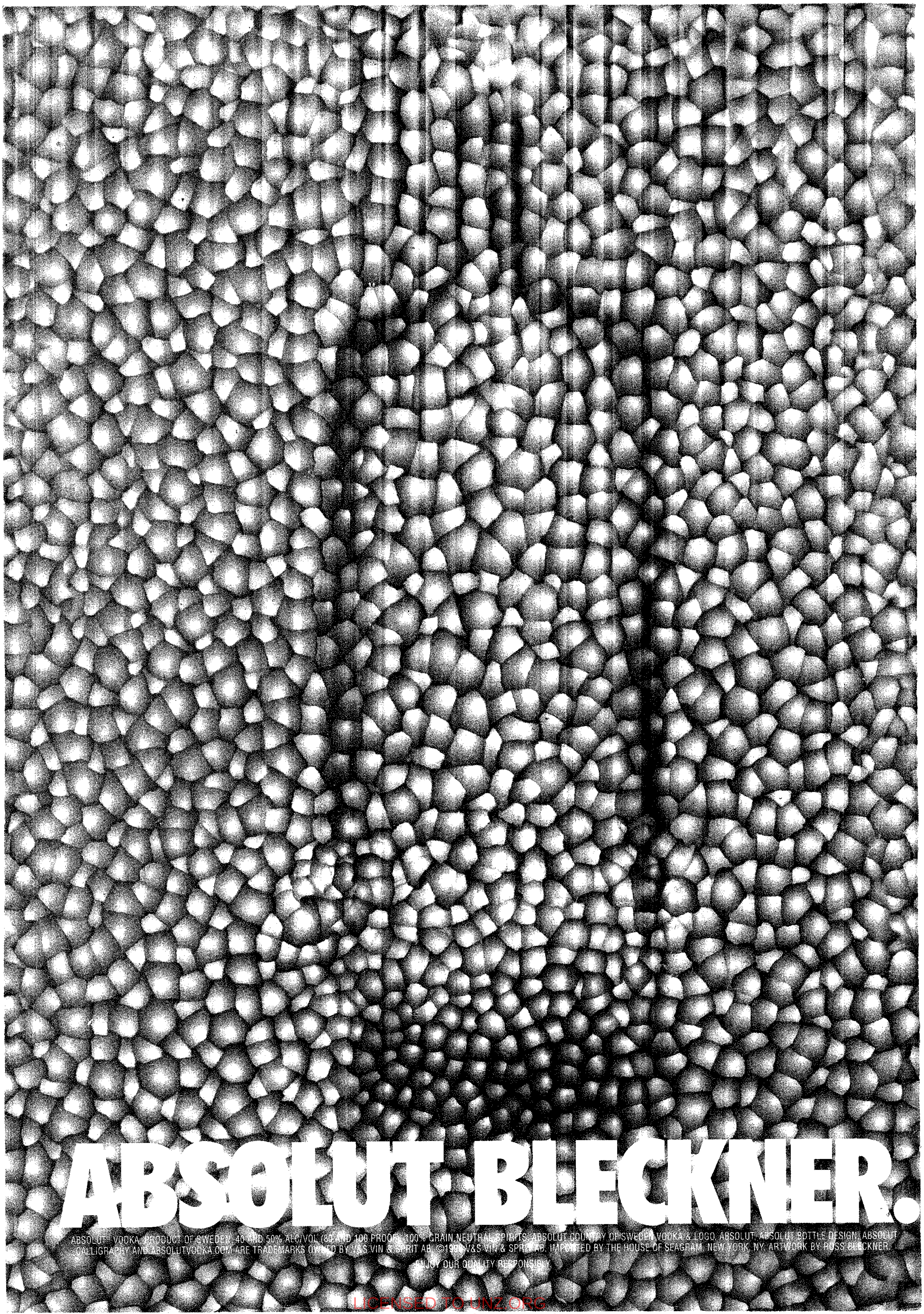

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